

RAIN

M A G A Z I N E



...the quietest hour if you lose marbles you lose just marbles

RAIN

M A G A Z I N E

NEIGHBORS & NEIGHBORHOODS
SPRING 2014

Clatsop Community College
Dora Badollet Library

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1680 Lexington Ave
Astoria, Oregon

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SELLING FIELDS

GORDON A. GRAVES

FICTION

Back in 1925, maybe '26, a farm boy borrowed his father's truck without permission, and made a trip down to New York City. He didn't take much of a load, just a slip of a farm girl. She may have had a cardboard suitcase, but more likely a collection of flour sacks and feed bags. He had no company on the ninety mile return.

To see "Big" Bill Flint in the forties, or later, you would guess he had never shed a tear in his life, but he cried that night. Sometimes he couldn't see the road ahead, and had to pull over and stop.

For his night's work, he got constant reminders from friends, family, and interested neighbors over the next forty years (at least) about the foolish thing he had done. His best friend never spoke to him again.

My Uncle Elmer Tudburn told us all a thousand times, or more, how a man isn't free, unless he owns his land. He'd tell us how the farm came down from his father's father to his father and then to him. How it would pass to one of us—eventually. Words such as these tend not to make the intended impression upon boys not yet in their teens.

Up and working before the sun rose and still at it long after it set seven days a week, Uncle Elmer had one vacation before he retired, in his seventies, and once wound up in the hospital for a couple of weeks. He could have easily made more than the milk check working in a factory eight to five, without the bother of the paperwork or the investment. When he died it would have cost over a million dollars to duplicate his farm.

Farmers and farm boys may be too busy to see it clearly, trying to make the farming numbers work and laboring away, but the drudgery the girls put in lets them see it happening. They see how farming doesn't reward their efforts, how it destroys those who try. If they can, the girls escape.

But even the girls don't see it all, only the old can see the bigger picture, and then only if they can look beyond their own narrow self interests. Then they see how the government has systematically destroyed farming and the farmers, how laws have been made and taxes levied with the express intent to drive farmers from their land, to benefit the rich and the real estate interests. No law nor bill has ever come to pass that benefited or protected the family farm, or the small farmer. Yes many have made these claims and received support from farmers, but they didn't fulfill their prophesies. These programs turned on those who voted for them, and bit them on the ass. You guessed it, they do provide windfalls for the very wealthy, lawyers, and factory farmers, the enemies of the family farm.

Uncle Elmer, unfortunate in appearance, didn't shave, bathe or do his laundry as often as the average citizen. He never gained a reputation for generosity, nor civic responsibility. Those who did business with him thought that is was through their own good luck that Tudburn lived up to his bargains. Uncle Elmer never thought he might have to court a woman to make her his wife. He believed it had all been arranged, that it would be automatic. When he lost his chance, he

remained a bachelor.

He had sisters who supplied him with a large number of nephews and nieces. Nieces liked to come up to the farm for the day, to smooze with the calves and piglets, and pet the horses, to have the cows lick their faces, to gobble wild and cultivated fruits in season, to climb the plum tree. But after scraping their knobby knees and elbows, smutching their favorite casual ensemble, and crosshatching their skinny legs with briars, they were ready to pack the farm in for another month or so.

Nephews could be sold more easily on the idea of staying on the farm for extended periods of time, even the whole summer. We seldom had to bathe. No one told us when to get up or go to bed or any of the other nonsense children usually have to put up with. On the farm we either did what needed to be done, or did without, our choice. Usually we didn't muck up more than once. We got to drive tractors and horses, shoot guns, take things apart and put them back together, and nearly maim or kill ourselves.

Sunday afternoon Uncle Elmer would load the lot of us in the back of his pickup truck and haul us to town. While he did the weekly shopping, we ran wild. When he finished, he would have pint boxes of ice cream which he would cut in half with his pocket knife, the same one he used to clean the horse's hooves, and distribute the halves among us.

At that time, our grandmother still roamed the halls, more ghost than human. She seldom ventured out-of-doors, let alone to town. She retired from the cooking, laundry and cleaning scene, but I understand a few years earlier she ruled the house with an iron hand. Likewise, her chickens, ducks, turkeys and geese were just memories and empty sheds. That meant that we got to cook for ourselves, not that we had any inkling how to go about it. Nevertheless we produced results that pleased us no end.

Aunt Isabel, at that time, desperately wished to attract a husband. She perceived, rightly or wrongly, that a big, awkward, opinionated, adolescent daughter might not be an asset to her quest. Often, in spite of her strenuous objections,

this daughter, Dick, got stranded at the farm.

Dick, a few years older than any of the rest of us cousins, in the beginning, knocked the rest of us into line, and made us do what she wanted. The adults called her "The Dictator" after those despots then losing World War II. Us children shortened it to "Dick." She hated that, so it stuck.

When present, Dick imparted a small amount of order to the kitchen. She also got to drive the tractors and all the rest, but I don't imagine she found it of much conversational merit back in civilization.

Most of the neighboring farms lay abandoned. They were growing up with brush, weeds, poplars and cedars. "Speculators," my uncle spat out, as he would his tobacco juice, "Land Pimps," as he drove by. The last two farms, side by side, holding out at the end of the road were my Uncle Elmer's and Bill Flint's.

On most of his perimeter, my uncle had to maintain the fence, because fences were of no interest to the land speculators. They had no crops nor animals. Uncle Elmer and Bill Flint maintained jointly, the fence between them. Uncle Elmer did his half, Bill Flint the other. They never worked together.

That fence might have been the best maintained fence in the world. Not a strand sagged, not a post leaned, nor could a loose staple be found. No Flint horses ever rolled in Tudburn hay, nor did Tudburn cows ever dine on Flint corn. Sometimes we could see Bill Flint working in his fields, or hear a curse from his lips that would take the curls out of barbed wire.

Whatever brand of tractor Bill Flint might buy, you could be sure my Uncle Elmer wouldn't have a tractor of that make on his place. It was a good thing Bill Flint exercised a certain restraint in his tractor buying, or we would have been down to horses. Us kids were encouraged to associate with the neighbors and folks in town, but not Bill Flint.

Uncle Elmer and Maisie Flint were born only days apart. The old people set it up. Not a formal contract. It was just taken for granted that Elmer and Maisie would one day get mar-

ried. Elmer and Maisie played together as infants. They worked together, played together, and went to school together as children and on through their teens, Bill always just a step or two ahead of them. The three were the best of friends and thick as thieves, according to my grandmother.

Not long after Maisie turned eighteen, she and my uncle set a date for their wedding, a rather distant date by community standards. With more than half the waiting period consumed, Bill took his trip in the borrowed truck, and things were never the same again.

Bill too remained a bachelor. If he had nephews or nieces I never saw nor heard of them. Maybe Maisie made a big name for herself in the city. Maybe she disappeared into its hungry maw. Maybe she moved on to other things. Maybe she raised a brood of squalling brats in its meanest slum. I never heard. Maybe she had hair like her brother, a mixture of blond, brown and red curls. Maybe she had his quiet, sad blue eyes. I don't think a woman could find a use for any of his other features.

It happened on a Saturday night. During that hot sticky day we put in an ambitious amount of hay. The bright sun couldn't cure the hay well enough due to the humidity, and Uncle Elmer hurried it along seeing the thunderheads stacking up over the mountains to the west. I suppose Bill Flint did the same on his side of the fence.

We won our race, but not by much. Mowers, like me, were still hard at it when the heavy drops of rain began to beat on the metal roof above us. Cousin Merv popped the clutch and pulled the tractor's throttle to its stop. He headed pell-mell, Uncle's string of curses following him up, for the machine shed.

Cousin Bert brought a quart of Uncle's beer out to the front porch, where we gathered to watch the deluge wash the fields and the lightning strafe the trees. Thunder claps rolled down the valley, one on top of another. The roof gutters overflowed, a curtain of water fell between us and, the wild storm winds that tore at the grass and tossed the limbs of the trees. By the time we finished the quart, the sun sparkled on the wet

close cropped stubble and the new green grass. Ozone tweaked our noses.

Not long after the storm finished, we went to get the cows in for milking. My uncle wanted a little of the new hay to feed them, and sent me up to throw it down. The hay seemed hot to me, but I paid it little attention. Uncle Elmer called up that I had enough down. To kill some time, I checked the hay. I could find spots so hot I couldn't hold my hand to it. I worried about spontaneous combustion. I descended the ladder, and confronted my uncle with my assessment of the hay.

He laughed, "Don't worry, it ain't that bad." My cousins laughed as well, but I stuck to my story. After we turned the cows out, got the milk in the cooler, and the pails washed up; to appease me, Uncle Elmer, with the rest of us behind him, climbed up into the loft. Uncle Elmer shoved his big calloused hand down deep into the hay. He held his hand to the heat, thinking long and hard, as the smile slowly melted from his lips. "Dick," he shouted, though she stood with a worried look right behind him. "Get on the phone, call the neighbors. Get the forks boys!"

We were just children doing men's work, but we did our best. We were tired before we began. The heat of the hay added to the heat of the day. Dick, naturally, didn't call Bill Flint, but she called everyone else. No one cared about our hay, or had time to spend. Dick returned with her bad news, to join in on the pitching of hay from one bay to another.

I don't think too much time passed, but it seemed we struggled for hours. Suddenly the hot dusty mow became still. Big Bill Flint rose like an evil apparition in the shadows of the hay chute. The feeble electric lamps in the rafters glinted off the polished tines of the fork in his hand. He stepped lightly over to where my sweat streaked/hay seed matted Uncle Elmer worked. Cousin Al, who had been taking his turn working alongside our uncle, moved cautiously away.

With Bill Flint at our uncle's side, the hay began to move with more authority. Uncle Elmer and Bill Flint didn't speak, saving their breath for the task ahead. All that long night they labored

shoulder to shoulder without a word passing between them, just a silence deeper than the grave. At eighteen past three in the morning, by my watch, Bill Flint and Uncle Elmer tacitly agreed that the danger had passed. Neither spoke to the other, nor would they ever.

Jessie Gilletti, a widow who lived just past the corners, kept the house up for Bill Flint in his later years. On July 31st 1985 she arrived early in the morning, as was her custom.

Bill Flint came in late from his morning milking. Bill said to her, "Jessie, call Mort (the cattle dealer), I ain't goin' to milk them cows no more." He took to his bed and died before the evening milking.

With me at his side, Uncle Elmer looked down into Bill Flint's coffin, and belatedly broke the long silence. "May 'e get the rest 'e'ved earned, 'e bloody bum."



KIM TAYLOR, *SOURDOUGH COWS*, PHOTOGRAPH

IN BROAD DAYLIGHT

R. L. SWIHART

1.

Though there are admittedly limitations, this is a workable
Aerial view: A : B : C

Of course to get them going we'll need a green light: WALK

A is a pretty young lady with black leggings, white blouse,
And big sunglasses. She gets the jump on B and C

B is a middle-aged man who still harbors an illusion or two.
He has the uncanny ability of simultaneously walking on Ocean Blvd.,
In Pere Lachaise. He is in the middle

C is an older man with a red face and stiff neck. *Watchtowers*
Are flashing in his outstretched hand

2.

In the crosswalk only C is talking. Foaming about a convention

3.

After C turns left (in the direction of the convention center),
It's only A and B

A increases her lead on B. Periodically she looks back, as though
To measure her lead. Occasionally she steps on a yellow magnolia leaf
And we hear it crackle

A keeps walking. B turns right at the courthouse

THE OLD RED COVERED BRIDGE

ANNA R. DAVIS

Beyond the stream of noisy towns,
The city shortly fades
Into a dusty country road
That winds through quiet glades.

And soon a river-scape appears,
Meandering its way
Around the curving country-sides,
Whose autumn colors play.

The swooping leaves from outcast limbs
When sudden breezes blow;
Release their hold, and dropping down,
Are carried by the flow.

And swirling round each outcropped rock,
They reach a pleasant scene
Where lane and riverbank adjoin;
A covered bridge between.

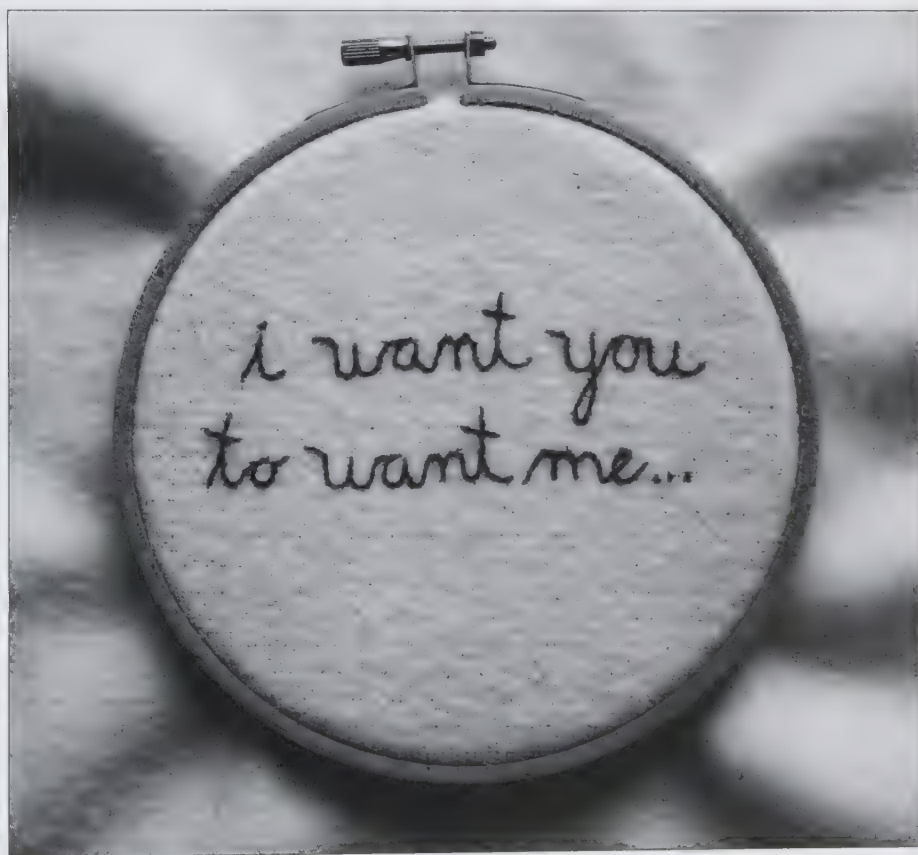
'Twas once the horse and buggy's trail,
tis now the auto's street.
The sound of roaring engines by
Instead of trotting feet.

Yet worn with ruts from constant use,
They rarely travel here.
E'er watching as the river drifts
It's memories on and on.

Of times when spring adorned the land
With flowers long ago.
And children stopped to run and play
In winter's days of snow.

When summer afternoons were hot,
Septembers eves were warm,
And creatures 'neath the bridges roof
Were safe from every storm.

So when I need a tranquil place
To rest and think a smidge,
I find myself remembering
The old red covered bridge.



MARIAH MANNERS, *I WANT YOU*, NEEDLEPOINT ON WOOL

DREAMS OF FLIGHT

KRYSTAL NORBERG

While walking through the park
I see a bird perched on a branch
Holding tight as the wind blows
Through making the leaves dance

A second comes to join the first
And then I realize
The two have built themselves a home
Finished with the skies

Built of twigs and leaves and dirt
In the shelter of the tree
They live in peace upon that branch
And are able to fly free

Unlike man these birds can go
Wherever they may please
Without restrictions they will fly
Upon the summer's breeze

They study me as I do them
A silent conversation
Perhaps they know I long to go
Soaring above the nation

Escaping human troubles
As they spend their lives free
If only I could go and fly
Through sunlight peacefully

Alas I am a human
And my life is on the ground
Dreaming as I watch the birds
Of freedom un-abound



GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN

TERRI VINEYARD

Stale breaths like sick rooms
stink of Luden's cherry lozenges
and strangers' barely stifled coughs-
Germ warfare is alive and thriving in the city.

I hold it in
for as long as possible, praying for
immunity from their infections-
 playing poker
with the Universe
without insurance as I inhale.
We lurch forward
crawling down the streets stinking
of deodorant, regret, and exhaust-
Bleary-eyed men in work boots
reek of fish and disappointment
 calloused fingers
stained with grease and nicotine
clutch seat backs in front of them and grip.
Children bounce backwards jostling babies awake
who cry and startle tired riders
while vacant mothers play Candy Crush on their phones.

PASSAGE IN TIME

AVE MIDDLEFIELD

FICTION

The old man sat at the table, a blank expression staring at an image in the distance, the eyes fixed ahead without recognition. The passage of time meaning less now than it had once, it was possible he could have been staring for only the past few seconds, or few minutes or even several hours. The sound of his breathing slow and labored, the raspy congestion full of the many years of cigarette smoking, or drink or maybe he was just getting old and it was TB. It must have been for some time though because his back and neck had stiffened from the constant sitting in the same position with little movement. The brown and tan evenly matched squares sat in front of him, the distance of a mere few feet or the distant shore of an uncharted island so many years before. From time to time a blink to lubricate the eyes or brush away a fly that had chosen to land near, beyond that no movement, just staring at the vision that lay before him. His left hand gently caressing his brow running his fingers across his weathered forehead, his right hand slightly extended resting on the table. A solemn figure sitting and staring without sadness, only the many years of wear, of salt and sea which was always present.

The white alabaster and black onyx figures lined in front of him one facing, the other with its back turned and away. The greetings from a distant shore or those which brought their inquiry as well as a martial intentions to fend away the curious. The right or the wrong, the stranger or visitor who came with supposed good intent only to subvert the locals and strip away all that was perceived valuable. The opposing forces standing

in silence ready to test the will and fortitude of the opposing force equally matched with arm and number. Who are the exalted, who carries the banner of the righteous for king and country, for God, for Allah, or the self proclaimed manifest destiny? Those who venture to the distant shores or those which seek to stay the advance of another culture, time and history will reveal the truth. The advance of the opposing force, the parry and thrust, the defense of a homeland, the extension of a culture. Who is the justified? Who to blame? Standing, shoulder to shoulder, neighbor next to his or her neighbor, the battle about to begin.

Both of the old man's hands were gnarled, some fingers permanently bent by the many years of labor, pulling, shoving and lifting the bales of goods destined for a distant shore. A deep scar which had the appearance of a rope burned into the flesh which ran the length of his right palm, then across half his forearm with the vicious coil ending at his neck, a reminder of a fateful day many years before. A loose hanging rope had slipped its bale, his back to the cargo winch the rope catching his right arm and head, and began to hoist him off his feet almost hanging him, except by the grace of God or Neptune, the sea god. A second mate had seen him choking, hanging from the bale as the winch began to lift the cargo from the loading dock to the ship's hold. Unable to scream because of the tightening noose, he kicked helplessly while inserting his left arm into the noose to stop his neck from being snapped, the bale finally lowered and he was cut loose. A lesson learned to never turn your back when moving cargo was at hand, a hard lesson to learn

at twenty two years.

The SS Golden Pacific was a steel-hulled, single propeller cargo ship built in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by American Shipbuilding and Dry Docks in 1900. It was made for the Hawaiian sugar trade, carrying its precious cargo from Hawaii via the Straits of Magellan and to New York City. The Golden Pacific was a little more than 430 feet in length and 51 feet abeam, coal-fired boilers powered a single triple-extension steam engine which turned a single screw propeller. A top speed of 12 knots, the Golden Pacific carried auxiliary sails in the event the captain felt the trade winds fair affording the opportunity to conserve coal. She had been equipped with two upright masts and used two large try-sails, afore staysail and jib, and a main staysail. Golden Pacific had a dead-weight tonnage of just under 9,000 and her cargo holds had a storage capacity over 375,000 cubic feet. During his lifetime of sailing merchant ships the old man had seen many changes, some good some bad, but none more significant than the completion of the Panama Canal in 1914 by the United States government. It would eventually reduce the transit time between the East and West coast of the United States by half.

An achievement of monumental proportions the canal across the Isthmus of Panama was the task of nations, bold governments with a collective vision and the brave men who came in thousand's. It is as the pyramids of Egypt, one can only marvel at the sight, wonder of its design and say that we are but a witness passing in time, let others share the experience. The Panama Canal was started by the French and completed by the Americans; from the early designs to its completion it took 33 years and a cost of some 28,000 souls. Most died of malaria and yellow fever before it was known that mosquitoes were the carriers of the disease, the contagion spreading from one to the next. It would be difficult to imagine the engineering feat necessary to dredge and build a canal and railway system some 48 miles long by 300 feet wide at a water depth of 85 feet with locks to control water from Gatun Lake, but it was done and in the lifetime of the

old man. He had been through the Panama Canal and the Isthmus of Panama countless times, each time marveling at the human effort to construct the canal. For merchant seaman, the navy sailors of the world, for those that build and construct, it is as Mecca to the Muslims, it must be seen to be experienced. It was the same for the old man, no sight the world over could match what man had constructed. The very last time he crossed from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, he spoke but a few words to his closest friend the second mate, "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his leaf shall also not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." The look the second mate gave him was one of surprise, "all these years, I didn't know you were religious." "I'm not, it just seemed appropriate for my last crossing" the old man said. "I will miss you old friend" said the second mate. "That I am missed at all is because of you my friend."

Upon reflection for many minutes, the old man lifted his right hand and shoved a queen side pawn forward P-Q3, his opening move for the game. Slowly the old man stood and stretched his legs while running his left hand to the back of his neck to softly massage the tightening muscles. He raised both arms into the air extending them as far as they would go high above his head, next came the creaks and snaps caused by his sedentary life. He shuffled his way to a window where the curtains had been drawn the prior evening and shoved the well-worn cloth of ocean blue to both sides along a narrow curtain rod. It was a bright sunny morning, the dew on the surrounding shrubs glistened as the sunlight reflected off the drops of moisture. In the distant he could hear a herring gull cawing as it took flight in search of a tasty morsel or possibly in protection of a nearby nest. Listening intently, the old man could hear the lapping of waves against the pilings of a wharf, a sound as familiar as his own wheezing breath. The view from his small shanty along the quay just as many of the other former merchant sailors, a two room apartment made for single men.

The old Sea Maid apartments were a collection of row houses set side by side facing the

sea wall and the occasional passing cargo ships and numerous pleasure craft. During the winter months, storm shutters were placed over the two small windows which looked west; there were no other windows in the simple but sturdy structures. During a winter storm, when rain pelted down hard against the shutters and door it reminded him of a storm at sea with all the hatches battened down. The gale force wind gusts slamming the superstructure of the Golden Pacific, raising the bow thirty feet at its crest and cascading downward into the trough of the wave. Water pounding the deck washing anything not secured over the railing and out to sea, including one and all who ventured carelessly out on heavy seas. Even ashore the old man was reminded of his days at sea, standing on land seemed more difficult than standing on the deck of the Golden Pacific. The natural tendency to constantly check his balance, the unconscious internal mechanism which acts as a gyroscope automatically correcting each movement of the ship no longer in use. It was disquieting to feel more at home on the unstable seas rocking in three dimensions up and down and side to side, than with both feet planted in the dirt. He could only explain the phenomenon as his 'sea-legs' which had been developed over the many years on board a ship and those that didn't possess as 'landlubbers'. He would smile at the irony, 'I suppose I am without my 'land-legs.'

A small bedroom in the rear of the apartment contained only a bunk, a nightstand which served the purpose of a collector of all things not sitting on a simple 3-drawer dresser. All his possessions were housed within, all save one, his water proof oil skinned overcoat which hung lonely in a closet. Sleeping conditions upon a cargo ship had taught him to reside in cramped quarters with few luxuries only the necessities of warm clothing and his Hamburg. The larger room of the two was a space which served as kitchen, living room and gathering place for the few visitors which came calling. It was fortunate for the old man that few called because he only had two chairs, one for each side of the table which served as his desk, game and kitchen table.

A shelf along a vacant wall seemed to be the depository for all his merchant sailor memories; a photograph taken of him with a young lady of Asian descent, possibly Hawaiian, an old sextant given him by the captain he sailed with for most of his years, a reminder of early mariners, and a certificate acknowledging thirty years of service to the American Shipbuilding and Dry Docks. Many nautical miles, many ports of entry, many acquaintances in life, but few good friends other than the second mate, a lifetime of experiences on the open oceans.

He walked the small confines of his apartment wondering if breakfast was a good idea, coffee, just coffee and maybe a sweet roll. He had stopped at the old Danish bakery yesterday on his way to his apartment and picked up an extra one just in case. A full pot was also a good idea, no sense making a half-pot; he would eventually want another cup later in the day. Stretching his tired body a little more with a turn from side to side, his coffee began percolating. The old man opened the front door and poked his head out, 'yes, it's going to be a fine day, clear sailing, a perfect day from Hawaii south southeast towards Mexico, then Central America and the Isthmus of Panama and the canal. A familiar route taken both from Hawaii east or New York south southwest. In the evenings after his shift was completed he would often stand on the transom, and peer across the froth churned by the propeller reminding him where he had been reliving the memories. Up ahead the bow pointed into the wind to where he was going, ahead always ahead, new lands, new faces, new memories to form. What better life than to be a merchant sailor?

In the background he could hear the perking of the coffee on the stove and the smell which seemed to signal the start of a new day. There is no other smell like it, the deep, sweet earthy aroma of fresh coffee steaming and the first sip of the mild bitterness and rich tang. Is there anything which satisfies more on a cold winter morning with the wind in your face on calm seas at two-thirds? I suppose the same could be said for any morning, anywhere where coffee was concerned. Scanning the horizon, the old man could see a

tramp ship, maybe from the Japan's, hard to see at this distance. He noticed white caps in the distance, 'wind is picking up a little, smells like rain.' The bright sunny morning was now mixed with puffed cumulus clouds, maybe cumulonimbus in the distance and the wind slightly freshening. The coffee now done, he returned to the seclusion of his small apartment, poured a cup of black coffee and grabbed the butter stained brown sack which contained his sweet lemon roll. 'Lemon

or cherry, don't care much for boysenberry or strawberry, too many seeds.' The first sip of black coffee was followed by a large bite of the lemon sweet roll, a little bitterness to cut the sweetness. Now ready to again sit down, the old man took the seat opposite where he had been sitting, the black onyx figures facing the white alabaster. With his left hand he shoved the black pawn to P-Q3, mirroring the move by white.



KIMBERLY ADAMS, *THE THING*, PHOTOGRAPH

REFLEXES

LANCE NIZAMI

Another day of cold air and diffuse light
Our bodies throw no shadows
The streets are wet from overnight rain
Gray are the clouds and the moods now, here in Hometown

Here the drinking starts early in the coffee shops
Here the drinking starts early in the saloon
Here the drinking starts early in the dark Irish bar

And every mind resonates with the same thought:
Send sunshine, precious sunshine, yellow sunshine
How we wish the low thick clouds would part for just an hour

No more of grayish-silver light; we dream of Mexico
We dream of light to baste in, light so bright we have to close our eyes
And so we do, imagining that bath of light

It floods our eyelids, warm and reddening
And for a moment we can pause, contented
Our eyes then open; yet, we still imagine

We see that bluish after-image, darker than the ocean or the sky
For that one extra moment, we're pleasantly in sunny Mexico
And then the image fades; we're back in Hometown

Hometown, now: the clouds and moods are gray
The streets are wet from overnight rain
Our bodies throw no shadows
Another day of cold air and diffuse light

LIES

BILL SHIVELY

Come to bed, she said, poetry shouldn't be so much work.
People who say the poems just come to them are liars.
All of them, she said.
The ones who aren't liars he said, are very bad poets.
And you, she said.
I may not be a very bad poet, he said,
but I know I'm a horrible liar.

BREAD

BILL SHIVELY

She said, this bread isn't very good.
Yes, he said, but it's the only bread.
Ever the optimist, she said.
Ever the hungry optimist, he said.

ON OUR KNEES

SETH PINCETICH

We cannot hear the songs of trees
Atop the crackling of our pyre
The world accepts us on our knees

Buzzing flowers fill with bees
As if the world should never tire
We cannot hear the songs of trees

In nights we fill with playful pleas
And loving that grows higher
The world accepts us on our knees

The wolves they all collect their fees
In flesh so bloody made expire
We cannot hear the songs of trees

With men and women who love to tease
Such flesh that more than lust inspire
The world accepts us on our knees

Perhaps all hearts could have their keys,
And our passions spread our fire;
We cannot hear the songs of trees;
The world accepts us on our knees



JAMES BARNES, *INTO THE WOODS*, PHOTOGRAPH

“THE MAIL FROM TUNIS, PROBABLY”

KARIN TEMPLE

(EMILY DICKINSON)

At elevenses
the mailman comes

my messenger
in celestial blue

my Hermes
in pith helmet

impersonating humanness
by a penchant for gossip

he makes his fateful
steady rounds

equanimous
to the nature of the news

the black-rimmed letter
the gaudy card the bill

his heaviest burden
the glossy hymns of commerce

his prize (and mine)
the post from overseas

as light and bright
as plumage

all gently placed
but with finality

of metal
slapping shut.

One day, messages
hand-written
hand-delivered
will go the way to Hades

like the telegraph boy
on his bicycle

like the herald
with shoes and helmet winged –

not yet, Olympians, not yet !



ROYAL NEBEKER, *LOSS AND REVOLUTION (SHIP OF FOOLS)*
OIL & COLLAGE ON CANVAS

REVERIE

LANCE NIZAMI

We all have a dream

A dog dreams of a bone

I dream of Paris

A dog dreams that I walk him in Paris where he finds a bone

An astronaut dreams of Mars

A halfback dreams of football

An astronaut dreams of being a halfback
who dreams of playing football on Mars

I dream of Jeannie with the light brown hair

Jeannie dreams of Max with the golden locks

I dream of scalping Max and handing Jeannie his golden locks

Groucho Marx dreams of comedy

Karl Marx dreams of world socialism

Groucho Marx dreams of a world comedy called Marxism

You dream of a big wedding

I dream of a juicy steak

You dream of me eating chicken at your big wedding
while I still dream of a juicy steak

We all have a dream

TWASN'T BRILLIG AFTER ALL

TERRY SHUMAKER

By evnig in th' scabbous cove,
The corpus Fangster sat and smacked.
Then in the murdlin water dove,
And on his salmon snacked.

"Take care, take care the Fangstertooth,"
Quothe the chombish Fisherbub.
"His bark is fomby well uncouth,
And his bite is griven drub."

He took his langwise net in hand,
Withall the Fangster foe he fought,
He thought the mumbly creature twith,
And his kind a prinksome lot.

"Can it but steer a cagish whim,"
The bluffish Bub began to think.
"I'll blonk it with a two by four
An in the murdlin sink."

The Fangster burbled to and fro,
The fearish plank went blonk kerplink.
The Fisherbub bejarred his foe,
And left him in the drink.

"And hast thou varmished Fangstertooth,
My qualmish chom, my drackish Bub?
Or hast thou fled, my warly youth,
And left him with his grub?"

By evnig in th' scabbous cove,
The corpus Fangster sat and smacked.
Then in the murdlin water dove,
And on his salmon snacked.

THE TEA HOUSE BY ZITHER LAKE

LYNN CONNOR

Hot water
a few leaves
time steep
a pot of tea
the scent of jasmine
poured
into two small cups
lifted
silent lips
a quiet moment
where we meet



KERRI ZELL, *THREE FRIENDS*, WOOD FIRED CLAY

KXMS

BRIAN DOYLE

FICTION

The radio station KXMS opened in 1956, late in the summer, as a station playing only Christmas music, and for a long time it was curiously successful, with a high point of some half a million listeners in the greater metropolitan area and a waiting list for advertisers; but eventually its fortunes declined, as the culture generally became more secular and less religious, and by the turn of the century the station had fallen upon hard times. There was a brief surge of popularity again in the months after the murders of September 11, for reasons that would be interesting to speculate about, but by 2012 the station's parent corporation was actively looking to sell or close the business, most of the air time was pre-recorded and unadorned by live comment, and the staff had been reduced to three, two of whom recruited advertising revenue with all their might.

The third staffer was a man named Thomas Murphy, age fifty. Thomas was the talent, so to speak, still hosting the station's one live show, a late-night stint featuring unusual Christmas music (jazz and reggae versions of standards, for example) and the occasional specials on holiday and religious music of other cultures and traditions; his specials on Mormon holidays were especially popular, particularly the April 6 show, celebrating Jesus' birthday in Latter-day Saints tradition, and May 15, the day that John the Baptist is said to have appeared to Joseph Smith in upstate New York.

But Thomas was no fool; he saw the future, and the future did not include disk jockeys making enough money to send their twin daughters to college. For a while he milked his contacts

in radio and television diligently for job leads, but everyone he knew professionally was in the same boat, and equally desperate for new jobs; he considered teaching at a community college or a high school, but education budgets were in free fall; he pondered quitting to write novels or screenplays, but as his wry wife Eileen remarked, quitting a job to be an artist was tantamount to giving up money altogether, which doesn't seem like a particularly wise decision at this particular juncture, does it, Thomas?

As September turned to October and Thomas scrambled to pay the girls' school fees, he found himself trimming his personal budget; no longer did he treat himself to lunch here and there, no longer did he buy beers occasionally for his friends after work, no longer did he buy books or music; that's why God invented libraries, as he said.

So that one bright fall morning when Thomas approached the station, and found the front door blocked by a grim Girl Scout, in full regalia, he thought for a surreal instant that the station had finally gone out of business, and defense against looters had been subcontracted out to the Girl Scouts, before he noticed a mountain of cookie boxes on a table.

Would you like to buy some Girl Scout cookies? Said the child, grimly.

Love to, said Thomas, but I bought some yesterday at the library.

This was a roaring lie; in fact he had lied to the Scout at the library about buying cookies at the grocery store, and now dreaded the lie he would have to tell at the grocery when she asked

him to buy cookies. There were days when he thought the Girl Scouts were tiny racketeers.

Several boxes? Said the Girl Scout, sternly. How many is several?

Ah...five, said Thomas.

What kind?

Pardon me?

What kind of cookies did you buy?

Thin Mints. Five boxes.

Liar.

I beg your pardon?

That's a lie. We are not selling Thin Mints yet. We don't sell Thin Mints for another week. We start out with the other kinds and then close hard with the Thin Mints. It's like the Feast of Cana—we finish with the best.

Cana?

The Feast of Cana. Where the guy made wine from water.

Right, said Thomas. Well, I must go.

You owe me fifteen dollars.

What?

You said you bought five boxes, but that's a lie. You know it and I know it. You might as well just face up to it and fork over the cash. We take checks also. No cards.

Right here, thought Thomas later, he could have simply walked away smiling, but some odd fictive impulse in him awoke, and he leaned over the table and looked down at the girl—MARGRET, said her name tag—and said, in his most reasonable sonorous velvety radio voice, well, Margret, I actually did buy five boxes of Thin Mints yesterday, at the library, and I happen to know the girl who sold them to me quite well, because she's my daughter.

He smiled, to ameliorate the sting of checkmate, and then turned to enter the station when he heard her voice behind him:

What's her troop?

He said the first number that entered his head, knowing that brisk confidence was his only hope: 23.

Liar. There is no Troop 23.

Yes, there is.

No, there isn't. That's the second lie you have told me in three minutes.

Thomas fled into the station and stayed slightly rattled all the way up the stairs and down the echoing empty line of offices until he reached his own. Here he calmed down, feeling at home—he had been in this office for twenty years, and had turned it into something of a warm den, filled with mementos and a tape library of his best shows. I really should have that digitized before the station closes altogether, he thought, not for the first time; but as usual he forgot about what he should do as soon as he started into what he did, which was become completely absorbed in music and obscure recordings and interviews with remarkable musicians and musical scholars, and plot out four-hour adventures in, say, music in Aramaic, or a whole show devoted to music about the Madonna, or a show honoring each of the animals present in the stable that miraculous day (you would be surprised how very many songs there are about sheep). Thomas was one of those rare and lucky souls who was very good indeed at the one thing he loved to do; as his wry wife had often observed, he very probably would continue to do the thing he loved to do even when it ceased to provide a living for the family, which is part of the reason she had become a teacher ten years before; she knew him well, and saw the future better than he did, but loved him thoroughly, and thought she would do her best to protect his joy when the crash came.

At lunchtime, as usual now, he had an apple, chewing slowly so as to savor each slice and pretend that it was a larger lunch than it was.

During the afternoon he made phone calls for the two advertising men; in rare cases the fact that Thomas himself, the talent, was on the phone with a potential customer sealed the deal, and it was Thomas who had suggested that they branch out and begin to call and apply for cultural grants, and look into possible benefactors who also might be slightly impressed that Thomas himself was on the phone, or in their offices, beaming.

He left at five, having completely forgotten about the grim Girl Scout, but to his surprise there she was at her cookie table, glaring at him.

Bring the money tomorrow, she said, with the same grim tone she had used before.

Listen, kid, I don't really want your cookies, and I have to tell you there's only three of us left in our offices, so it's not like you are going to break the bank here, okay?

I sold more than a hundred boxes today, she said. Tomorrow I'll sell a hundred and fifty. Not counting your five boxes.

He gaped; a hundred boxes?

I'll be here all week, she said, and my goal is a thousand boxes.

He stood there transfixed. By the end of the week this child would make more money than he made, by far. And for the Girl Scouts! The green mafia!

I'll make you a deal, kid, he said. I'll bring your money tomorrow. In fact I'll buy ten boxes. In exchange for which you come to a staff meeting. Bring your mother or your manager or whomever is in charge of your protection ring. See you in the morning.

In this odd fashion began the renaissance of KXMS, its resurrection, as it were, from the bottom of the ratings and advertising pool to today's renown; Thomas later found it difficult to explain exactly what he saw in Margret that led to the meeting, but he much enjoyed telling the story of the meeting, and how within a few minutes he and the advertising men were gaping as Margret laid out plans for advertising incursion into the Jewish community ("There would be no Christmas without Rabbi Jesus"), the Muslim community ("All prophets are honored at Christmas"), the vast and intricate Protestant community ("Christmas is the one time a year when all Christians are home under the same roof"), and even, as she said, the uniformed community; the advertising men for a moment thought she meant the armed forces,

but Margret had bigger plans; every Brownie, Girl Scout, Boy Scout, Cub Scout, Sea Scout, and Campfire Girl in the tri-state area would, in her vision, soon be an agent and ambassador—essentially a small advertising executive—for KXMS, appealing to not only their parents but to their entire family circle; a plan that reaped spectacular results among the Mormon and Hispanic communities, with their large numbers of children, and concomitantly, aunts and cousins, etc.

By the summer of 2013 the station was not only in the black but earning so much in advertising revenue that corporate took it off the market; by Christmas 2013, the station had quadrupled its listenership, and, under Margret's direction, established a serious online presence; by summer 2014 the station had been the subject of, at last count more than a hundred adulatory stories in print and electronic media around the world; and in the fall of 2014, as Thomas and his wry wife drove the twins to college, Thomas could revel in what one major newspaper had called one of the most amazing and brilliant media turnarounds in modern business history. And well he might have reveled, too, as a man who had worked hard and well in his chosen profession; except that, as they drove up a lovely alley of immense elm trees, his wry wife remarked that eventually Margret would have to go to college also. Thomas's heart sank for a moment; but then he calculated that Margret had four more years running the station before she matriculated, and by then he could, with a good conscience, retire. As they parked and unloaded the car, he insisted that each of them eat a Thin Mint, for luck, and then they made their way to the residence halls, Thomas humming Christmas songs.

WALKING IN & OUT OF THE WILD SIDE

JANICE HOPE HORNING

“Stay out of the bight!” is the first thing he learns,
When a logger puts boots on the ground,
Love of woods, water, rain,
While ignoring his pain,
Filling ears with the wild side’s sound.



FRED DENNER, *BIRCH FROST*, PHOTOGRAPH

HERON-SHAPE

JOAN GRAVES

heron
neighbor-in its gray
winter
frock
hip
tall
cool
with
his/
her
pale
trim
wisp
in the
breeze attentive
hunting for a tasty frog
or perhaps tempted by a
shimmering fish swimming
innocent while the sun shines
bright on his/her small body the
fish not dreaming of being eaten in
a gulp by this elegant creature who
must dine often in order
to be
in its
so to
say self
preserving way sacrificing small creatures left and right
meanwhile evading becoming sustenance for a hungry eagle
or a clever coyote out to maintain their places on this planet
~~~~~  
~~~~~  
~~~~~  
~~~~~

DON'T TELL THE SUN NOT TO SHINE...

LARKIN STENTZ

Don't tell the sun not to shine!
Because you're having trouble with your mind...
Don't tell the river not to run!
Because your life has only just begun...
Don't tell the forest not to grow!
When the hair on your head is all you have to show...
Don't tell the moon not to rise!
Because you have dark glasses over your eyes
Don't tell the wind not to blow!
Because you're growing way to slow
Don't tell the flowers not to emerge!
When it's anger in your heart that you need to purge
Don't tell me not to love!
Because it's your fear you can't rise above
The Sun Shines
The River Flows
The Forest Grows
The Moon will rise
And the Wind will blow
And the flowers will show
That love will always grow
Because love was their beginning
And
Love
Is
Neverending.

OFF THE TRACKS

TAMI VINCENT

FICTION

“When you survive a brain tumor you learn to appreciate the small favors life hands you and not ask too many questions.” Kerianne explained to her daughter, Samantha. “You worry too much. Some people are just ready to move on and can’t take their past with them.”

If the secrets the abandoned beach house held were as obvious as the awe-inspiring views it offered there may have been pause before purchasing. Kerianne didn’t give a second thought to why the previous owners might have packed only their most essential belongings and left behind a lifetime of memories attached to a house full of furniture, full cupboards and worn linens.

“Yeah, okay mom. Leaving behind everything you own and running away in the middle of the night is completely normal.”

“Sam! Let it go. I swear you ...” Kerianne did a double take as she caught the flicker of a lamp coming to life in the far corner of the family room. Seeing the lamp was indeed off, she dismissed an eerie sensation and made a mental note to replace the lamp.

“See that was totally normal too” Samantha teased.

A metal clapper clanging out a chorus from the local dinner train prompted the entrance of Sam’s eight year old daughter, Sara, who insisted they follow her to the back deck overlooking the tracks. The sound of an old steam engine hissing and racketing down the old rails was strangely hypnotic. While Sara waved wildly at the passengers serenading them Kerianne felt dizzy and discombobulated. She reached out to steady herself and almost didn’t catch the railing in time.

Kerianne decided this episode could easily be attributed to the multiple brain surgeries she had endured over the years. She hoped today would be uneventful since Sam and Sara were leaving for Portland.

“The brain is a tricky, tricky organ that has a mind of its own” Kerianne reasoned to Samantha after her lost car keys were found in the freezer. Their lingering hug goodbye confirmed her suspicion that Sam was worried about her.

Despite the many pieces of someone else’s history strewn throughout the house, Kerianne succeeded in making the house feel as if it were her own, except when she had to go downstairs. The hair on her arms went rigid and her heart hammered in her chest when she forced herself down one stair at a time to flip a switch in the circuit box.

“Just stay on the phone with me Sam. Nope, I am just not used to being alone here, especially down *here* ...” Denying her fear but so tense she flinched with every single creak of the old wooden staircase Kerianne hurriedly accomplished her task on the lower level, phone in hand.

“I wish you and Sara could have stayed longer ... I know ... Upstairs now, I’m good. I know ... I know ... talk soon. Bye.” Despite her effort to pretend she was unaffected, she found herself feeling more and more hypersensitive to energy fluctuations in the house.

Propped on cozy pillows in bed on a stormy summer night Kerianne relaxed sipping hot tea by candlelight. Engrossed in her latest romantic read she scarcely noticed the peculiar aroma of pipe tobacco. Overwhelmed by the smoky fragrance

she attributed to the sexy Native American toking on a peace pipe in her book, she almost missed the arrival of her guests. Her eyes glanced up from the page and caught a translucent blanket of wispy smoke floating up from the floor until fading into her ceiling unveiling a frenzied mass of uninvited visitors.

The figures materializing around Kerianne's bed were so numerous there wasn't an inch unoccupied. Crammed shoulder to shoulder they clambered and climbed over each other to gawk down at her as if she were the sideshow attraction in a traveling freak show. Too scared to breathe she willed herself invisible. She tucked her chin and slammed her eyes shut. Her entire body vibrated with terror. Icy whispers swirled around her body licking at her skin. While trying to block out a thousand voices screaming all at once she missed the release of her bladder as fear devoured her muscle control.

Without opening her eyes she stealthily reached up to flick on the light. As the lamp showered the room in brightness, she peeked. Everyone had vanished. Fearing a complete break with reality, Kerianne flicked the light back off to prove to herself it was only a hallucination brought on by the misfiring of synapses in her brain due to the negligent nick of a neurosurgeon.

They were still there.

The figures around her bed dissipated but her room was still occupied. She involuntarily scanned the room until fixating on a woman that compelled her attention. Tiny tendrils escaped a tight bun and fell gently around a slender neck kissing a cameo brooch choker. Her slightly pale face adorned with red lips lit up as she threw back her head in flirty laughter. She was standing in a small group of young women which appeared to be engaged in conversations with gentleman callers in smoking vests holding drinks in beautifully etched glasses displaying gold Heisler emblems.

Covertly she reached up and flicked the lamp back on. Safe in the illumination she sat there cowering while soaked in urine, afraid to breathe until the rescuing light of dawn. Kerianne couldn't see them anymore, but she knew whatever door had opened tonight left her realm

exposed to theirs.

There had been a small portion of her tumor that couldn't be resected due to the risk of hemorrhage, so there was a part of her that questioned her own instincts. She wondered what level of reality that horrifying night alone in her bedroom fell into. Kerianne began to question her own sanity and decided to invite Sam and Sara to come for a visit.

"Mom! Why aren't you watching Sara? I told you I was taking a bath and needed you to keep an eye on her ... why didn't ..." Samantha stammered.

"She is right here. People accuse *me* of brain impairment ..."

"I...I...was in the tub and heard her talking. She sounded funny... scared, I don't know. She kept saying, *"Mommy, can't you hear me?"*"

Kerianne studied Samantha. The pulse in Sam's temple was visible as her heart pumped her bath-heated blood through her arteries. As soon as Sara was down for the night, Kerianne let everything she had been holding in go. She told Sam about the ache in the back of her throat that constantly reminded her she was never quite alone here. She articulated the terrifying night in her bedroom in which she feared she had suffered a psychotic interruption.

Sam stormed through the house throwing items in a bag to prepare for the night in a hotel. "Tomorrow we are going to get to the bottom of this. Tonight we're leaving."

July 17, 1892

The tune of the train ... clackity clack ... clackity clack ... until the steam powered ballad turns into a bellow straining like a group of wild horses at the reigns before a body of water... the steam driven Heisler locomotive chugging the passenger train Northbound... its whistle shrieking out its high pitched warning... until the sounds of shattering glass and shards of splintered, scorched metal fill the interstitial spaces between wheels and track. Screams of passengers drowned out by the cataclysmic metal versus metal of the steam engines' momentum

forcing a ninety five ton iron casket down the tracks halfway off its rails. One last resistance of metal stretched to its limit before the track bows to force its corruptor free from its grasp. Deafeningly silent the remains of the locomotive rested in a pile of smashed metal, broken glass and human debris.

"Charlie ... it's Bob. Sorry to wake you ... yup, it's a bad one. Real bad. You will need to call those boys you hired last winter that helped with the last mess. Bring bags. Yeah ... passenger train. I already called Gary to bring the crane ... who knows how many we will find underneath ... ok ... see you soon."

Ican't believe the original owner of your house, Charlie, earned his living cleaning up dead bodies off train tracks ... and the worst

wreck in Oregon history was not far from your house!" Samantha looked over at her mom's sullen face and watery eyes. "Let's take a break from all this research. The microfiche isn't going anywhere ..."

As Kerianne recognized the woman in a photo as one of her visitors she was equally relieved and brokenhearted. An old newspaper displayed on the old screen reported a tragic account of a mother who never made it back from a social in the club car to the stateroom of her sleeping daughter. A total of 112 fatalities whose journeys ended that sad summer night in Rockaway would forever be imprinted in Kerianne's memory, who vowed to never spend another July evening alone in her home.



TERRY SHUMAKER, *Fresco*, PHOTOGRAPH

BALLAST

PHYLLIS MANNAN

Thirteen, I slouched against
the drain board after supper, slicing
mindless slivers of Pillsbury's
best chocolate cake.

You're eating that for ballast,
my father accused me. For once,
his words didn't dart away
like fish. They leapt up to bite me.

What was wrong with ballast?
Another smidgen couldn't hurt. I slid
my rudder through one more
latitude of lapping waves.

Now, in the produce aisle,
my father holds up two ruby
grapefruit—one in each
hand, as if to steady himself.

Retired from ship repair,
he's traded steel for a lighter
load. *They'll do*, he says, smiling,
and places them in my cart.



KRISTIN SHAUCK, *FLUTTER*, ACRYLIC ON UPHOLSTERY CANVAS

TO SWEETEN THE BITTER TASTE OF MOONSHINE

JOHN D. CIMINELLO

I abandon myself
On the road from wheeler to Knoxville,
Burning the rumors of exile,
Spurning the moon like an unfaithful lover,
Watching miles of coal cars
Haul anthracite into the darkness,
As if the dust of stars
And the black lungs of miners
Give clues to the mystery
Of my regret.

I jump into the waters
Cold and acidic from mountains broken
And moved by dynamite,
My baptism begins by staring into
The moon's impassive face,
My own betrayal
Waits on one side of
The stinging riverbank
Thick with nettles, brambles,
And bull thistle.

I cross over
To the other side where
Moonlight penetrates a backwater pool,
Catfish turn in the lucid deep
And the sound of water on stone
Illuminates my sleep,
Voices ripple on the surface of my dreams
Like shadow dancers in the forest
Or smiles to sweeten the bitter taste
Of moonshine.

I forgive myself,
Like a promise to forget,
And sip clarity from the mason jar
As the moon rides across dark clouds
Skimming the lip of the ridgeline
And sending beams of storm air
Trembling through the hickory and pines,
Time to return to the road south
As my body shivers in the moist beginnings
Of a new day.

IN THE DARK

JOHN D. CIMINELLO

A dusty moth appears
At the window
Beating its wings
Against the salmon moon,
Reminding me when the brown bat,
Terrified and confused,
Entered the house,
We flapped our towels toward the open door,
Waved our arms and occasionally ducked
Trying to guide the sightless out.

Blind hard luck
Sometimes possesses
Excellent hearing
Sharp enough to hear
Well-meaning shadows,
Dancing and trembling in the dark
Trying to point the way to freedom
In a language incommunicable
Like singing with hieroglyphics
Or singing like whales.

The moth spreads its wings
Across the pane of glass

And for a moment rests,
We baffle our senses
Trying to break free
Of the morally contradictory mess we make
For ourselves living in the dark,
As if we're ghosts trapped
In a photograph double exposed
And transparent.

Everything we touch
Vibrates with the insubstantial echo
Of a sound we cannot hear,
The moth doesn't understand the window,
And the bat fails to appreciate
our frenetic efforts,
caught inside my own illusions,
I turn off the light,
The moth hesitates and then
Flies toward the moon.



VICKI BAKER, *NUDE I*, MONOTYPE

THE REAL THING

PHYLLIS MANNAN

NONFICTION

My book bag still lay on our round kitchen table, my jacket over a chair back. I'd spent my day cajoling chatty high school seniors a month from graduation who thought they could slack off for a substitute teacher.

On the green-tiled island, an icy, unopened can of Coke sweated beads of moisture. Just what I needed. I picked up the cold can and headed into our office to check emails. But before I could sit down at the computer, David, my adult son with autism, strode into the room, snatched the can from my hand, and walked out the door.

"Hey, David," I yelled, "what are you doing?"

He returned and stood in the doorway, expressionless, without the pop. "Sorry to take the Coke. Next time I'll ask." It sounded like he was apologizing, but I didn't think so. In David's lexicon, *I* often means *you*.

I looked up at him. "Who needs to ask before taking the Coke?"

"Mom does."

So that was it: I was the soda thief.

Sometimes one has to be resourceful to get at David's meaning. Because of his autism, he doesn't process information the way most of us do. I've learned to ask questions if I don't understand his intentions.

I'd done something worse than snag a can of pop, though; I'd trespassed on David's turf. In

some ways, food and drink define David in the way that fancy clothes or cars or trips to Europe define others. His first "words" at two years of age were *dub-e-dub-e-dub* for potato chip and *ort* for orange juice. Now, at twenty-eight, food and drink were the only areas where he had some control.

David returned to the office and set the Coke can on my desk. I reached for it. It was almost empty. I gave him a frustrated grin.

His next action caught me off guard. Standing next to my chair, he placed one big hand on my chest and one on my back and squeezed, as if he had me in a vice. His hug, if that's what it was, was so mechanical that I laughed.

"I love ya," he said, his voice flat like Rain Man's.

I couldn't remember the last time David had said "I love you" to me or anyone else. Sometimes, when he does say the words, I think they're ones he wants me to speak to him: "I, Mom, love you, David." They're a bid for attention, as when a woman says to her husband, "I love you," trying to get him to say the words back to her.

This time, it really didn't matter how David intended the words. His stiff-armed squeeze was a poor imitation of a hug and I wasn't sure how he meant it, but I would take it as a hug. He'd taken my Coke, but he'd given me the real thing.

MIDWEST FARMERS' DAUGHTERS

TELA SKINNER

NONFICTION

Daddy collected trophies for his prize Holsteins at the county Black and White Show every August. His trophies filled the top of Mama's china cabinet and buffet, so everyone could see.

A small golden calf, or cow, perched on a pedestal above an engraved plate read "Best of Sire," "Best in Class" or "Best Showman."

Twice Daddy brought home a larger trophy: a model Holstein cow, standing proud over the words *Grand Champion*. Daddy wanted a son to inherit the family farm and carry on his seventh generation Biblical name. He got four daughters.

While under his roof my sisters and I would work, and hard, by God, to develop muscles and earn our keep. We plowed, planted and cultivated rich, black soil; heaved chafing bales of hay across wagons on scorching summer days; fed heifers, milked cows, kept production and breeding records. All the chores.

And... Daddy taught us to judge. Show heifers, he said, should be strong and substantial, with solid frames, bright eyes, and clean-cut square jaws. Rugged and sturdy, with style, scale and a long, fluid stride. Upstanding and tall, not short-bodied, weak or frail (like me).

Show cows should have large, shapely, high and firm, udders, with prominent veining and proper cleavage—built to produce offspring and milk for years of profit. Daddy's highest producer, Old Swingbag, whose udder almost touched

the ground, never entered the show ring.

We learned to walk backward with our show animals around and around our circle driveway, holding heads high, posing, trying not to fear pokes and prods. Before showtime we shampooed deep-bellied bodies, scraped manure-stained hooves and polished them with Hard-As-Nails.

We braided and fluffed long white tails then sprayed on AquaNet. We clipped hair on heads, next to dips over shoulders and across the back, creating the appearance of straight and smooth.

Once, without looking my way, Daddy warned, "If a stray bull gets a heifer pregnant when she's too young, it can ruin her life." Daddy didn't want bulls. He wanted heifers to build a herd of future milkers. Newborn males were slaughtered, except for those he castrated, raised as steers and butchered when the freezer got empty. Maybe all Daddy's wishing for female offspring screwed up his chances of having a son.

Regardless, there we were, four daughters, clearly inferior to other farmers' boys. But we trained young heifers and cows with all the feminine curves: wide high rumps; strong, straight legs; long, lean thighs; and perky udders to show well in the ring; so Daddy could collect a few more trophies and something to cherish in his old age. After he sold the family farm and no one carried on his name.

THE FINAL GOODBYE

CALANDRA FREDERICK

FICTION

The gathering storm clouds seemed to Cole an omen of the way tonight's final goodbye was doomed to go. They slowly drifted into the horizon on the arm of the tempestuous wind like women at a local theater clad in grey and black silk gowns peering down from their heightened box at the evening's unfolding drama. Tonight would be their last night together. In the morning, Cole would leave these untamed coastal shores for the moving tides of cultivated people and the hope of riding the groundswell of monetary dreams. When he was young, the idea of ever leaving such a magical place seemed impossible. Nothing in this world, he had believed, could have made him abandon these breathtaking shores. Or so he had thought. But as he had grown up, he had learned that childhood ideals were often dragged out into the sea of modern society and drowned in the turbulent waters of financial failures.

When he was twelve, he had witnessed his father treading against such ruin. Unlike so many others who find themselves pulled down, his father had managed to pull himself back out, cutting a deal with local buyers, saving the family business. Now with the waves crashing down in these hard economic times, Cole had found himself being swept under. However unlike his father, he was not sure if he could struggle against the tide and safely make it back to dry land, or if he even wanted to. Perhaps it was best not to struggle. Perhaps he should accept the inevitable, letting the water pour into his lungs, sinking his lifeless form down into the regions unseen.

Cole walked past the small church, where his parents with their strong traditional fisherman

roots had dedicated him first to God and then secondly to the sea. The white paint was peeling from the outside walls, victim of the wind's capricious anger and the salt water's bombardment of spray. Yet for all the ruined paint chips being gnawed off by the blustery gusts, the large stain glassed window still managed to majestically catch the fading light and reflect it back over the little town. The small church stood strong as a lighthouse guiding men's souls home from the stormy world around them. Its panes of rose and teal colored glass depicted a scene that every inhabitant had experienced before in some way; a man being lost at sea. The window reached up to the highest peaks of the small church, with only a simple wooden cross erected above it, atop the grey shingled roof. This was the hierarchy of almost every townsman's heart. They had an undying love for the sea, for her unruly and spirited nature, and because of their devoted love, they knew her character. Her moods were changeable and her fury easily provoked. No man would she bow her will to, only God could command her. As a result, the parish was full every Sunday with those who desired the sea and her bounty. Heads were bent and knees bowed before the pulpit and the picture of Christ lovingly looking over the preacher's shoulder. Their uniformed prayer was not for the love of her wild spirit to be quenched, but merely for Christ to safely guide them back home when her wrath was bearing down upon them.

Cole slowly made his way down the street, taking in his surroundings and making a mental picture of the quaint shops and houses he saw. He

knew she would be waiting for him at their spot, but he was in no hurry to have to tell her the news. To tell her that he was leaving after promising to be with her always. She could never come with him, and he could not stay here.

Cole could remember the first time he had seen her. They were both only small children at the time, around four or five, but her presence had made a lasting mark on his memory. His father had taken him for the first time down to see the ocean. Looking out at the vastness with childhood amazement, Cole had seen her there on the sandy beach, her long flowing black hair being playfully tossed up by the wind and her blue sundress flowing down off of her thin frame, waving at him. She stood there wispily giggling with one foot in the sea and the other on the dark sand. He could remember being confused seeing this girl he didn't know teasingly gesturing to him, beckoning him to come to her.

As the years passed, Cole's love for Morgana had grown stronger rather than fade as most childhood fancies often do. When they were children it was an innocent friendship. They would meet every afternoon at the sandy beach, regardless of the weather, to play. Their imaginations allowed them to act out their childhood fantasies of becoming pirates marooned on a cursed island or silkies diving under the crashing waves. When they were adolescents, their relationship naturally deepened. No longer did they come to play. They would meet at their beach and sit across from one another. Sometimes Cole would speak, talking about things that had happened, but usually they just sat gazing out beyond the ocean's line. Now that they were adults, their love was a deep passion. Everyday Cole woke with Morgana on his mind, and every night it was Morgana's whispers that lulled him to sleep. He could not imagine a life without her in it, until now.

The wind rushed down the streets finding little resistance to break its driving force. Most of the town had abandoned the streets deciding to weather the storm huddled inside their warm homes. "Which is where I should be," thought Cole. But he had promised her. Promised to meet her tonight at their beach.

The waves pounding against the sandy shore roared off the last row of shops that served as a buffer for the rest of the town. Cole made his way past them, now feeling the full brunt of the wind's force. As he stepped off the defined paved path and onto the unmarked sands, Cole stopped. There at the water's edge was Morgana. Her wild hair whipped against her. Her flowing blue skirt seemed to pour off her long legs and into the sea. And as the angry white foamed waves beat themselves before her, the spray glistened on her bare shoulders and soaked her seaweed green top. Cole stood there for a moment just watching her. After all these years, she was still the most beautiful thing he had ever seen.

Cole made his way down the beach towards the ocean. As he drew near Morgana, he could now clearly see her shaking from coldness and, he suspected, anger. He sighed. She knew. "Why didn't you tell me?" Her voice was steady, but Cole could hear the deep hurt in the undercurrent of those words.

"You're freezing," Cole said, taking her up in his solid arms. Morgana fluidly twisted in his arms to face him.

"Colbert, why didn't you tell me you were leaving me?"

Cole stared into Morgana's light blue eyes, made more vibrant by the affronting storm. Only she called him by his real name. Everyone else he knew just stuck to calling him by his nickname.

Cole sighed. Now that he was near her again, the realization that he was leaving her was enough to drive him mad. He felt like he was being torn in two.

"Come on. Let's get you out of here," Cole said starting to lead her away from the water.

"No. This is where I belong," said Morgana with disdain, "even if you have forgotten."

Pulling away from Cole's embrace, Morgana turned and began walking down the beach, her bare feet always in the water. Cole groaned and followed after her. She was not going to understand, and her fury would be enough to destroy him. Down the beach, Cole could see the cove where the marina was located. He knew tied up at the end of the wooden pier was his boat.

His father had named her Freedom, and Cole had never seen any reason to change her name. To the passing observer, she was nothing special. Her rails were rusting and the once rich red paint that coated her hull was now faded and rubbing off. But to Cole her name still perfectly described her. She was his freedom. Almost every morning Cole would go out on her, with Morgana singing next to him, past the invisible marker where they could no longer see land. There in every direction the watery surface rolled out before him. Here is where he felt his freedom from the world. Here where survival was based on your own courage.

Up ahead Morgana had stopped walking, bring Cole out of his thoughts. "You promised," she said, unable to face him.

"I don't want to leave, but I don't know what else to do," Cole pleaded. "I'm out of options."

"You'll hate your life," Morgana said. Her words were caught up by the wind, muffling them to a whisper.

"Morgana," Cole started, but he was unable to say what he wanted to. He knew his words would betray his heart, although his mind was still urging him to remember his obligation. She stared intently at him. "I never dreamed..."

The rain began to fall cutting off his words. Cole felt the first drop of water splash against his face. Then like a cork being pulled from its bottle, the rain began to pour out from the sky. Cole looked around him for a place they could hide from the coming onslaught. Only the pier that held his boat offered any hope of protection. "Of course," Cole thought as he grabbed Morgana's hand and began to sprint for it. "After deciding to leave, here I am running back to my home."

Seeing the boat made his heart beat just a little faster. Perhaps his heart would betray him. The closer he got to the pier and his boat, the stronger his resolve became to never leave it again.

The rain continued to fall heavy, creating puddles in every crease and crevice. Cole ran down the pier towards his boat, still gripping Morgana's cold hand. At the end of the pier his boat rolled and pitched against the churning waves. Cole released Morgana's hand and leaped onto the moving deck, his sea legs countering the

movements and balancing him upright. Reaching over the side, he gripped Morgana's outstretched arm and pulled her to him. There in his arms, rooted on the deck of his home, Cole decided his future. Against all logic, he would follow his heart.

With the rain blasting against them, Cole made his way towards the cabin. As he turned the handle, the wind caught the door throwing it open. They hurled themselves through the doorway, and using all of his strength, Cole pried the door shut. For a moment there was nothing but silence. Then Cole could hear Morgana walking down the steps and into the cabin. He continued to stand at the top letting his mind register his new decision. For the first time in days Cole felt a peace. He made his way down the stairs and into the cabin, just as Morgana walked out of the bathroom clothed in blue jeans and her navy fleece. Cole knew he should change out of his wet clothing, but at that moment all he wanted to do was lie down on the small bed and let the sea rock him to sleep. Morgana slid next to Cole, wrapping him in the blankets. "Morgana," Cole whispered.

"Yes?"

Her voice now sweet was all the encouragement Cole needed. He could feel his words start to seep out. "I'm not leaving. This is who I am. How could I leave it?" For a few minutes there was nothing but silence. Then Morgana's soft voice trickled out.

"If you stay, you'll be ruined."

"I know," Cole said, "I know what it is I'm saying."

"You're sure?"

"Yes," he said firmly.

Morgana drew herself closer to Cole. "Then I promise to never leave you."

Cole drew his breath in and slowly let it slip back out. Now he was home. He could face his future knowing he had made the right choice. The boat continued to pitch back and forth, but instead of a storm trying to capsize him, the sea was now simply rocking him to sleep. Next to him, Morgana began to hum an old sailor's tune about the sea nymph Nerine and her mortal love

that she brought with her to live at the bottom of the ocean. Her soft singing was slowly bringing him down. For the first time in a long time, Cole succumbed to her voice and drifted off to sleep.

Morgana drew herself up and climbed out of the bed. As she walked towards the stairs she turned to look back at Cole. He lay there peacefully asleep. Morgana made her way up the stairs and opened the cabin door. The wind still howled. Drifting to the bow, Morgana bent over the rope latching the boat to the pier. Gracefully her hands unbound the sailor's knot and tossed the slack rope into the water. The boat, now free, began to be pulled out into the sea. The waves still churning pulled it further from the safety of the shore. Turning her gaze from the dwindling land, Morgana faced the west and whispered, "I promise to

never leave you." She slowly walked back towards the door, opened it, and stepped down the stairs to lie forever next to Cole. Overhead soaring alone in the squall, an albatross drew near.

In the early light of morning, a yellow capped fisherman slowly made his way through the town towards the marina. It had been three days since the most violent storm the little town had ever seen had beaten down upon them. The man stopped in the local coffee house to fill his old dented thermos with the one beverage that would promise to keep him warm. While he waited breathing in the fresh brewed aroma, he picked up the morning paper to read the front page headline:

The Sea Traveler Post

Est. 1869

Monday, January 12, 2009

\$1.00

Missing Presumed Dead

By Connie Shaw

Coast Guard calls off search for local fisherman, Colbert O'Hara, after his vessel was lost at sea during record storm.

The twenty boat search party discovered debris from the Freedom yesterday, but there remains no sign of O'Hara. The search was called off last night at 7 p.m. when the likelihood of finding O'Hara alive was declared improbable.

According to Coast Guard spokesman Luke Smocker, "We are calling off the

search due to the probability of us never finding the victim. As of tonight we are declaring this a drowning. We did find several pieces of debris from this vessel, but there was no sign of Colbert.

As to why such a skilled fisherman would have gone out in such a tempest, I don't think we'll ever know. All that can be determined is that for some reason, Colbert O'Hara went out on his boat alone with the sea and didn't return.

WALKING THROUGH FIRE

BRUCE DUSTIN

FICTION

Oh, it must have been about six o'clock in the evening when I heard the siren. I was watching TV, and, as usual, I couldn't quite distinguish whether the sing-song emergency signal was coming from the program I was watching or from the world outside. I turned off the sound and tilted my head to one side, trying, I supposed, to line up the sounds from the outside with my ear canal.

A slow gravel lane meanders out to the main highway in front of my house, and when I shifted my head around to try and pick up any errant sounds of emergency, that's when I detected the faint flash of a red light from down on the road.

There was a fire truck and two wild lands fire fighting vehicles at the end of my driveway. Their windows were rolled down and, even from a distance, I could detect an animated conversation—hands waving and pointing, gesticulating concern as to direction and access, I supposed.

I walked slowly down towards the beginning of my driveway, keeping my eyes on the gyrations of the people in the vehicles, trying to make heads or tails out of what they were trying to figure out. When I finally got within ear-shot of their conversation, though, they suddenly revved their engines and sped off. That's when I looked down the road and saw at least two other vehicles, their lights flashing ominously, vehicles sitting in front of a neighbor's house. I was wondering, initially, if this was merely a training session, a coordination of the various emergency agencies in the vicinity until I looked back at my house and saw smoke billowing up into the sky from deep in the

forest. My first thought was that a fire in that vicinity had nothing but catalyst for combustion between it and my wooden structure.

When I walked over to a neighbor standing out in her yard, one whose precarious position to the fire was equal to mine, she informed me that she'd just heard on a walkie-talkie that they were considering evacuating us, the houses in direct contact with the forest in our back yard. She had, in fact, been the first to detect the smoke and had been the one to alert the local fire department. I could see her young son and a couple of her nephews hanging out guiltily in the background. I looked at them and then back at her, squinted my eyes a little, my head shifting back and forth, but she didn't own up to anything—overtly or covertly. I've known her for a while and I assumed there would be a discussion in the quiet recesses of her house tonight to make sure that their stories coincided.

More flashing lights were coming down the road, passing us, heading to an access gate back down and behind the forested area that bordered our houses. I could hear staticky radio traffic as the engines passed by. I quickly ran home, grabbed my camera, and headed out through my back yard and toward the forest, ever mindful of the blackberry brambles tugging at my legs, penetrating my shins and calves as I headed toward a trail that snaked through the forest and towards the other side, the location where the smoke was filtering the setting sun's rays. I was on the east side of the fire, and I felt a sense of discomfort from a slight warm breeze coming from the south, pushing northeast, a discomfort from the

ominous portent of the slight warm breeze.

I found a deeply rutted road, one that was overgrown but still discernible, and whose biggest merit was that it was free of blackberry brambles. I followed it in and around old growth trees. I moved through an expanse probably the length of a football field and then came into an opening that was heavily infested with smoke. There were spots of fire in several locations and I pondered the wisdom of continuing forward with the pockets of burning brush on either side. That's when I remembered the camera in its case. I quickly extracted it, held it as if I were calculating its weight, and rationalized how interesting photos would be if I were to travel through this conflagration. So, I threw caution to the wind and started walking and flashing.

I passed through an opening in the fire and found myself in a smoky charred inferno. There was a figure coming towards me, or maybe it was my imagination. I kept walking towards the image and it became more and more focused. I think he was a firefighter, but I wasn't sure. He seemed comfortable with his surroundings but uncertain about direction. He asked me where the trail led, if it allowed access from the other side, and I assured him that it did. He continued on past me and I kept walking.

For some reason I had failed to bring my camera up and take a photo of him. I think it was that initial shock of confronting a human form while traversing an expanse of hellish terrain.

So, when I saw another figure with a fire hose in hand, I quickly lifted my camera to my eye and recorded his emergence.

"What the hell are you doing in here," he demanded.

"Taking photos!" I thought maybe it was obvious from the flash and the camera in my hand and I suddenly felt compelled to reciprocate the question in light of the fact that he was in full fire fighting regalia and brandishing a fire hose, albeit a flaccid fire hose that wasn't emitting the lifesaving substance of liquid.

He wasn't into conversational mode, though, at least not with me. He got on his radio and reported that he had come across a man in the

midst of the fire taking photos.

I could hear a crackle and snort of derision as though coming from the radio itself, and then a slow, measured voice said, "Well, escort him out!"

"You don't need to," I informed him. "I can just follow the hose." I then set off through the dark, desiccated terrain.

The further I walked the more personnel I came in contact with. They were carrying additional hoses and spades and buttoning up jackets and securing hard hats as I passed them by. The terrain had turned a little unsettling. I had to watch my step, testing the security of logs and avoiding debris that didn't seem to have a stable base. The smoke was clearing and as I came down off a slight ridge I could see several emergency vehicles on a logging road below.

I came across tees to the water line and found crews spraying embers. Guys walked past me brandishing chain saws and I took photos of them hustling forward, toward the fire. I came across a guy standing up on top of a severed stump. He had an imperious sense to him as he raised his arms and looked around, jabbering as if to the wind. There was a feeling of expediency to his pose and a young minion down on the ground was relaying his edicts to a radio. They were the source, I supposed, to the voice that had ordered me escorted from the surroundings.

I went down on the road and took photos of people working controls on the vehicles, or extracting equipment from side doors, or transferring water to different recipients. I was suddenly struck by a girl standing beside a truck with a yellow hard-hat affixed to her head. She wore jeans and a tee-shirt and seemed lost in the hustle and bustle of the men around her. I focused my camera on her and shifted it sideways and zoomed in to get a sense of her shape and form within the midst of this cacophony of activity.

And then I dropped my camera to get an unfiltered look at her. Avoiding her eyes, I looked above them. The internal structure of her helmet raised it slightly off her head, suspended it almost in mid-air. I thought, suddenly, how it kind of resembled a halo.

"Where did you come from," she asked me.

I felt hesitant to talk to her if for no other reason than that I wanted to stay aloof from my surroundings, merely an observer, recording the event in photos. I pointed back at the fire.

"You walked through the fire?" She asked incredulously.

I have to admit, her question stopped me.

I looked back at the rise of billowing smoke obscuring the vegetation; I looked back at flames reaching their tenuous fingers into the fabric of the forest. I could hear the crackle and pop of the fire having an angry conversation with the trees. And I, too, wondered why the fire had allowed me to pass through unabated.



KIM TAYLOR, *UNTITLED*, PHOTOGRAPH

GOD'S TEARS

KERRI BUCKLEY

*As if she'd called rain home from the sky.
As if she'd called down God's tears.*

She taught her children when they were young
rain is the way God cries. In Portland,

God cries a lot, washing away the grime of
humanity by the hour. Compassionate Portland.

Each morning she stops at the coffee shop.
Diana Krall sings *Cry Me a River*.

The barista asks, *How's your day going*, and
smiles. She wants to say, as he glances up,

My child is on drugs. Then he will watch her split in
two, like eggplant halved in a single stroke by a

Chinese chef, so swiftly, hand and knife blur; water
droplets on aubergine skin remain intact.

She is cracked and crumbled like a pumpkin
fallen fifty feet; she's a large broken cardboard

heart torn down the middle, held together
with duct tape, twine, covered in colored crayon

scribbles beginning *Dear Mom*, ending *I love you!*
She's a rain-soaked pietà: soggy, sagging, sodden,

but she says, *Good*, as she does every morning, picks
up her mocha, smiles, moves to the door, a

wavering, damaged drugstore valentine that no one
else can see. Outside, the coffee's steam rises, the city's

stream of sympathy falls upon her face, a baptism
of place, this rain, these tears, beating hearts, broken.

PIXIE CUT

KATHIE HIGHTOWER

NONFICTION

She fed the material into the machine, pumping the foot pedal automatically to keep a steady rhythm going. This was probably Agnes' favorite time of day, well night really. After all the drama with homework and the fights over whose turn it was to wash the dishes. Tonight had been the worst yet at homework time with Kathie's math. Funny how genes work. Math had always been Agnes' best subject. It came easy. It came easy to Nancy and Boohi too, but not Kathie.

Her normally quiet middle child, the one who'd always loved books and school and learning, more than outdoor activities, ended up standing on top of the kitchen table shouting "I DON'T KNOW! I CANT DO THIS! I HATE SCHOOL!"

All triggered by Agnes asking "What's 8 times 4?"

Granted this new school was hard, but what an opportunity. She and Joe agreed as soon as they heard about the Deutsch-Amerikanisch Gemeinschaftschule, a Berlin experiment to further German-American relations. Disappointed that there wasn't a 5th grade yet for Nancy to take advantage of, they immediately put Kathie and Boohi's names in for consideration. And were thrilled when they both got in. All paid for by the German government, with busses provided by the U.S. Army. Agnes was shocked more American parents didn't jump at the chance.

The kids weren't so thrilled. None of their close friends were going to go, so they'd have to start over in that department. Boohi was fine, really, as soon as he found out they had soccer during recess.

"I bet I'll learn even more from the German boys," he'd said in between mouthfuls of spaghetti at dinner the night they discussed it. "They've been playing since they were babies."

Kathie cried over it all. Change. Her big issue. She'd been like that from the beginning. Scared to try new things. Afraid to do things by herself without her sister along. The two were inseparable with each move until they found their own friends. This move to the new school was way outside Kathie's comfort zone, on her own really, her younger brother wasn't much help. The language challenge didn't help the transition. It had added to Agnes and Joe's evening workload for sure, having to help the two translate from German into English for some classes, then do the assignment, then translate back into German. Agnes knew the German parents were facing the same thing, as half the classes were taught in English and half in German. Her own German was improving as a result. A bonus.

The biggest problem was math. It was so advanced here. At the American school, Mrs. Vincent had just started the class on multiplication tables when Kathie moved to the German school. The German kids could already answer questions like 14×17 with a click of their fingers. Or maybe it's a click of Mr. Singh's fingers. Or maybe I'm confusing that with the way Kathie described them "raising their hands" to be called on.

"They don't just raise their hands, Mom," she'd told her sitting at the kitchen table eating graham crackers after school. She demonstrated the move, flipping her hand in a sideways chopping motion, so that her fingers and thumb

clicked together making a noise.

"It's really irritating. Plus it hurts my fingers and my wrist." Agnes would have worried about her wrist, but she knew Kathie rarely raised her hand in any class. She always doubted her answers even though she was usually right. Every teacher had said that about her, "she needs to speak up more in class...she needs to participate more."

Agnes pulled her thoughts back to what she was doing. Letting the quiet of the room sink in. Kids in bed. Joe in bed. The only light in the room shining down on the heavy green metal Pfaff sewing machine. This jumper took more attention with the thick quilted material. Kathie had picked it out because of the tiny red and orange flower pattern...and the warmth. Her new school was drafty. When they decided to test out this new school, the committee had to take what they could get. The old elementary school had been abandoned for a newer one. It wasn't ideal but had the basics.

Her girls had no idea how difficult different materials could be to work with. She was extra careful these days, of course. Ever since that quilt-sewing class at the Volkshochschule two weeks ago. She could still hear the woman next to her scream. Still see the blood. Still see the needle stuck deep in her finger, right through the nail bed. It had to hurt even more when the teacher finally got the machine moving again just enough to get the needle out, to pull the finger out.

Using both hands, Agnes carefully pushed the fabric through, letting the rhythmic sound of the machine calm her thoughts, even out her breathing, letting go.

She needed extra calming after the multiplication exercises and yesterday's hair drama. Usually, the worst night of each week was bath night. These German homes had no hot water on demand except the tiny tank above the sink in the kitchen. The bathtub sat next to a six-foot copper tank. Joe would light the fire in the bottom compartment to heat up the water. They all got to share that water.

Joe tried putting things in perspective.

"You kids are so spoiled," he'd ranted one night when the kids were arguing about whose

turn it was to go first with the bath, for the cleanest, hottest water. "When your mom first came to Berlin in 1948, when the Berlin Airlift happened, we could only turn on the heat for one hour a day, could only use electricity for laundry one hour in the middle of the night. We always used cold water for baths and hair washing. And don't even get me started on what it was like in the war." Not that he ever would. He didn't talk about the war, about the Battle of the Bulge, what he saw liberating the concentration camp, about the buddies he lost.

The war and true hardships were like ancient Greek or Roman history to the kids of course. They were used to the "luxuries" of hot water on demand in the military apartments they first lived in when Joe and Agnes returned to Berlin after a few years back in the States. They'd gotten by with no shower at the cottage in Cape Cod, washing in the lake. The apartments in Berlin had been a step up.

Agnes had to admit she missed some of the ease provided by the apartments, the "stairwells" as they all called them for some reason. Especially the top floor of "maid's quarters," free rooms that allowed any American family who chose to, to have a maid, a college student or a widow woman, working as a part-time maid in exchange for free room and board. Margarete had been like a grandmother, so great with the kids and such help with cleaning and cooking, two things Agnes hated to do. She'd had time for golf and sewing and art classes with Margarete around. The kids had plenty of playmates and the big playground right outside their front door.

But this house "on the economy" had the room they needed for a family of five, plus a fenced in yard so they could finally get a dog. Worth the few inconveniences like the bath situation.

At least it seemed worth it to Agnes and Joe. The girls especially complained the most about only being able to wash their hair once a week. Granted, long hair was harder. Kathie especially had such fine hair that it got greasy and stringy after a day or two. She kept it pulled back into a ponytail with a headband pulling back her bangs,

but it wasn't very attractive, especially with those heavy black government issue glasses.

Which is exactly what led to yesterday's trauma. She'd taken Kathie to the local hairdresser and asked for a short cut. Maybe Kathie hadn't understood the German words or maybe she didn't hear her. Agnes admitted she talked with the hairdresser quietly behind Kathie's back. When Kathie saw the pixie cut in the mirror she started to cry. Change again.

By the time they got home, Agnes managed

to calm her down.

"It looks great," she'd said; she did think it looked great, brought out Kathie's hazel eyes. "And think how easy it's going to be to take care of; you can wash it in minutes; you can even wash it in the kitchen sink more often if you want with that length."

They walked into the entryway. Nancy was just coming down the stairs. She stopped, stared and yelled, "They SCALPED you!" Kathie's tears started all over again.



VICKI BAKER, ARTIST CAROL, INK PEN

JANUARY

KRYSTAL NORBERG

FICTION

I'm standing at the edge. Below me a thousand feet of empty space juxtaposed with a violent sea. The day is bright and clear and just the sort of day I love. But I can't love. I can't feel. I am numb and hopeless and I really should just end it, but something holds me at this edge. My toes are anxious to press off and send me flying through the air to end it all; to end this pain that is already trying to drown me.

Suddenly I am torn back to that night. The night my dreams were slashed and gutted and strung from a tree; the night I lost all hope; the night my body was taken by force and I was too afraid and too frozen to even fight back.

And I'm vaguely aware of my knees as they crash down onto jagged rock, probably bleeding, and I crumble into the fetal position. Tears stream down my face just as they did that night. And I can see his face though he's miles and miles away. I can see that gleam as he forced my hands above my head and began to dissect me like a frog. Spreading me open and poking around.

Perhaps I scream. Nobody would hear me over the thunder of the ocean against this cliff anyway.

I can almost feel him as he decimated my ability to laugh and love. I feel the pressure and I see myself turning away, crying silently and cringing as he used me for minutes that stretched for years. And then it is over. For a moment, I recall the way I tried to pretend I could live with it. That it could have been consensual and maybe there was just something wrong with me. Who would believe me, anyway?

Always the bright, bubbly center of the

room, I had done my share of provoking illicit responses from men. But teasing isn't consenting. Being alone in the same room as a man doesn't give him the right to my body.

But it didn't matter, did it?

I had been there, and he had been there, and because I was a woman, that meant I was asking for it. I had given him the right to defile me with a silent turn of my head, my mind too paralyzed with fear to realize what was happening. I didn't scream the way I should have. I may have said no, so many times it became a mantra, but men don't hear the word no.

My heart breaks, my soul spilling from the shattered pieces, the light that had once burned so bright now gone.

He stole that light. Crushed the last glowing embers with his boot and walked on.

I lay for hours on the rocks, falling in and out of nightmares where he is the villain and I am never rescued.

But then, just when I think maybe there is nothing for it but to jump—to send my body surfing on the wind, gliding toward the water like a bird diving for prey—the dream changes. I see a woman, bright and beautiful and she is me. She is who I will never be if I close my eyes and fly. And I am crying harder than ever because I can't allow him to take this from me. Not after he has taken so much and destroyed so much of who I was.

And out of the crushed and fading embers bursts the phoenix. She is a woman with scars and great fears and crippling self-doubt. She is the revenge that I will never have if I leave this world. She is the survivor. And with time, she will be me.

TWO POEMS

JAN BONO

SUNRISE

Cacophonous geese
encircle misty sunrise
soft pink wings stir fog

SUNSET

Down with the sun
I walked toward the ocean
until the darkness
like the water around my ankles
enveloped me
and held me in its arms

TWO POEMS

PATTY HARDIN

1.

entranced by reed notes
birds gather round the flute player
while he yearns for the homeland
where love still sings
through mountain clouds

2.

mourning her lost dream of dance
she lives in the shadow
of the one who holds her heart
a pirouette around
broken promises

A DADDY'S HOPE

TAMMY L. LAMBERT

so many hopes are
built

on her small
shoulders

wrapped in the pink
blanket

resting in his
arms



JOSEFINE MABRY, *QUIET*, PHOTOGRAPH

SHIMBASHI CIRCLE

D. R. HUTTON

You wore red suede shoes
 with spiked glass heels
How could I know they would last so long
 past the fast Shimbashi night
The Immortals
did not tell me the night
 I walked
from Shimbashi Station
 to meet you
Our names would be wound
 on a prayer wheel
 with ten thousand things
 circling the city in fire and wind
When you slipped on
 your glass heels in the rain
or the next day
 eating fresh sushi
 from the shop
 next door
Nothing has changed
Nothing's the same

DONKEY LOVE

FLORENCE SAGE

“Methought I was enamoured of an ass.”
Titania, *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, IV.i

But he’s the one, thick and strong he stands
his stubborn ground against me,
– which I can’t believe appeals –
something in his sturdy equine nature.

What am I doing with this guy?

His bristly hair and long twitchy ears,
those stomping little feet and lolling eyes,
the swish he makes with his scraggy tail,
the earthen smell that attracts black flies

and all the things he does entirely wrong,
won’t promise or plan or compromise,
and when he does speak he usually blaes,
leaves without apology and no goodbye
and you can guess he never calls.

The shame, oh think of the shame.
I’m in love with an animal.

Don’t explain to him a woman’s injuries and needs,
don’t complicate his head, he’ll just trot away,
it’s what he does. But tell me,
is any of this his own dumb fault?

I long and watch and wait and cry for his return
until I can no more and then I do.

In his own time, he hoofs at the gate.
I wipe and brighten my face,

set sweet wine in saucers on the floor,
strow green apples on the carpet, lay new hay,
sweep through my closet for a fringy shawl

to answer his rising bray, I run, stretching
my arms like a chain of daisies around his neck,
giddy and wild and ridiculous as we are,
clattering through my sunny cottage door.



KIMBERLY ADAMS, *GINGER*, PHOTOGRAPH

UNTITLED

KRYSTAL NORBERG

Oh how to talk about you, at which end shall I start?
There is of course your merriment, *amuser of my heart*

Sometimes I think we're fated never shall we part
And yet you take advantage, *abuser of my heart*

But your smile makes me smile you are a work of art,
You beautiful, misunderstood *confuser of my heart*

Sometimes you take everything and then you do depart
You guzzle down all my love, *you boozier of my heart*

Still, I lift you up and help you, giving you a brand new start,
Such a lonely and afraid, *user of my heart*

And now with pride I watch you even as we grow apart
For I know that you are better off *a chooser of my heart*

You have shown me how to stand alone and even to restart
Still I love you totally, *seducer of my heart*

LIFE

JAYMES CONDON

Give me a beacon of light through a valley of trees,
Give me the majestic mountainside upon which they stand,
Give me a shimmering lake to grace its base,
Give me the babbling stream feeding therein,
Give me the mighty waterfall, careening down,
Give me the cliffside, forged by Father Time...
Give me the Earth before my eyes,
And I feel nothing.

Give me a view, I can give you no melody.
Give me a landscape, and you'll get no rhyme.
Give me nature, I've no story to tell.
Give me static imagery, and I, too, become static.

Give me the heave of a slumb'ring infant's breast,
Give me its mother's soothing lullaby,
Give me the father, fixing the morning coffee,
Give me the dog, fixing for its master's attention,
Give me the raccoon perusing the rubbish outside,
Give me the crow, perched comfortably on the roof...
Give me the world before my eyes,
And I feel everything.

Give me a man, and I'll give you a melody.
Give me a woman, I'll give you a rhyme.
Give me a child, and stories you'll hear...
Give me life, and I, too, am alive.

TIME VESPER

REBA OWEN

Curvature of the moon
Always changing, always the same,
Let us observe before we sleep,
Every flower fattening seed,
No cloud too plain.
Delay your racing.
As each day passes,
Release your heart to something.



STIRLING GORSUCH, *WOMEN'S INTUITION*, ETCHING

REUNION QUEST

KATHIE HIGHTOWER

FICTION

The Hilton Hotel bar is reserved for the Class of 71 and packed with people of one age, self-conscious in new clothes, scanning for recognition amidst clumps of people.

Raucous laughter at Julie's Roseanna Dana imitations are the center of attention even now, just as in high school; fatter, frumpier, but funny survived.

Quiet Jan sits to her side—still Julie's best audience—sweet and smiling, bruised around the eyes, a bit of a shadow hiding in Julie's limelight.

Bill walks in, takes over "The Bar's open," Mr. Congeniality kick starts the crowd to talk, connect, laugh, loosen up. Booze accelerates conversations. Microbrews, Scotch, Gin, Chardonnays, Malbecs cons away from Budweiser, Boones Farm and Ripple.

Many faces unrecognizable even after a surreptitious glance at the yearbook. Anonymous still forty years later, why would you come?

After all the years some dynamics reappear as if they were all still walking the halls of Robert E. Lee High School, yet to embark on adult life. Football players hold court, heavy now for the most part. Some have gone completely to seed, balding, potbellied, and red-faced. Popular in

their mind's eye, they gush over plays from the past.

Many of the women have aged better, fitter now for one thing. Back then athletics were only for outcasts; girl's field hockey players far from the popular crowd.

Cheerleading was the only accepted athletic pursuit in 1971, long before gymnastic style cheers. Those popular cheerleaders are grandmothers, now, many times over, matronly or not here at all.

Clichés appear, echoing high school reunion movies and books. Edgy, nerdy kids now successful professionals, handsome, beautiful, polished.

Funny how you can feel accomplished in your current life, comfortable in your own skin. Yet one evening with the HS crowd and old insecurities seep back in, folding back into your introverted self.

"Why do we come to reunions," Karen asks, "when we can't make time for other friends, deeper friends really, from adult life?"

"It's affirmation," Sarah says. "Everyone here knows where we started; we want to know we turned out all right."

LIFE IS A STORM

SONOVA AIKEN

Let's get lost in this storm together
Travel many miles chasing its anger
Begin losing yourself in the skies forever

Too many stories to remember
First winds of early December
Let's get lost in this storm together

Hearing the sirens come closer
Starting to cling tight to your lover
Begin losing yourself in the skies forever

This ponderous life still isn't over
In the distance all you see is a blur
Let's get lost in this storm forever

Don't forget who you once were
Even though it won't make life easier
Begin losing yourself in the skies forever

Living comes with some danger
Especially dreaming as an adventurer
Let's get lost in this storm together
Begin losing yourself in the skies forever

ENOCH PETERSON, 1892

BLAINE VERLEY

Enoch Peterson scratched his name into the window pane
of what is now my upstairs dining room window

Facing east, catching the early morning sun, each letter carefully engraved
in tidy looped penmanship, followed by the date, 1892

*And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methusalah 300 years,
and he begat sons and daughters*

I wonder who Enoch Peterson was and why he chose that window.
This old orange house in Alderbrook is 134 years,
and begat many sons and daughters.
But that's a far cry from Methusalah

*And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years,
and I have a sneaking suspicion Enoch Peterson was only twelve
when he lifted his mother's diamond from the edge of the kitchen basin
and walked over to the sunny window to immortalize his name
in carefully looped letters that are clearly visible now 122 years later*

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him
And just maybe God put him back, here, in Astoria for awhile,
A young lanky Swede with sandy hair and good penmanship
and an eye for the girls and the River that runs strong to the sea

And some years later Enoch Peterson begat sons and daughters
here in this house
With the long-lived genes of Methusalah

ARIETTA

CARMELO SABIDURIA

FICTION

Andante

In inch-long steps Harold shuffled along the fluorescent-lit hallway, his walker serving doubly as brace and makeshift dolly. His load—a full sized, electric piano keyboard—was strapped across the top of the walker with a red bungee cord. Every step was a struggle. And all the while, the precariously fastened keyboard yawed side-to-side, threatening to upturn his walker and plant him solidly on the thin, commercial blue carpet.

His hands were covered with liver spots and bruises that became birthmarks they took so long to heal and they trembled as he squeezed the grey rubber—slick with sweat under his palms. No boy imagines he will ever be so weak, so utterly dependent upon the goodness of others. Those who have money can buy help, but not Harold; he was a blight on the happiness of his children, he knew it, even if they were too kind to say it—too kind but not rich enough to save his Betty from this place, where the doctors all told you everything would be fine, with straight faces, never smiling, their words betrayed by the body bags wheeled out under their turned up noses. Nevertheless, Harold was confident they could cure his wife. She wasn't that sick. His watch chirped the top of the hour—Camille should be ready.

Allegro

"God made kids just to drive me crazy," said Nurse Nancy, rolling her eyes as she dropped carefully to her knees, wincing as she put each one down against the thin carpet and scolding

herself that she didn't take her diet seriously. She looked at the young girl standing next to her, smiling, probably at Nancy's discomfort—the young girl who bought every item in the vending machine, but just let it all pile up in the slot down below to the point that the inward swinging flap couldn't be depressed far enough to retrieve a single item. Nancy pressed on the hard plastic flap, hearing chips and candy bars crunch inside. It didn't budge, so she pushed harder and it yielded half an inch. She shoved her fingers in the slit while holding the flap open with her elbow and pinched the corner of a small bag of chocolate coated peanuts. Wiggling it free, she tossed the first rescued treat at the girl's feet. God knew how long it would take to fish out the others.

"What'd you do that for?" Nancy asked.

"I had to get something for my brother too," said the girl, smiling.

Fermata

Wheezing, Harold approached the elevator, still pushing his load. The white reception desk was unattended—a product of the hundred dollars he gave his granddaughter, the best hundred dollars he'd ever spent. He pressed the button with the arrow pointing up at the same moment the elevator doors opened.

The frail face of the silver haired woman standing in the lift transformed into a broad smile. Her sagging skin clung to her cheekbones like sheets draped over forgotten furniture. It was Betty's roommate; who was, at her best, a nuisance. "Harold!" She exclaimed.

"Get out of my way Edith."

"What is that?"

"It's an enema bag. Now get the hell out of my way."

She still smiled at him, her small head trembling uncontrollably. Taunting him, she said, "Nurse Nancy said no concerts. I heard her. I'll tell." She was living proof that some people never do grow up.

Harold glanced over his shoulder at the—for now—still vacant reception area. "Get out of my face you old gas bag before I clobber you with this thing. I'm on bought time."

"Oh my," she said, "I'm calling the nurse." And she stumbled past him, waving her right hand.

Harold heaved the walker and keyboard into the elevator. Edith scampered down the hall as the doors slid shut. As awful as she was, he had to admire her top-end speed.

Accelerando

The vending machine was half-emptied by the time Mrs. Furman rounded the corner.

"Harold threatened me," she cried.

Nancy looked at the visibly shaken elderly woman and sighed. "He's just a bitter old man Ms. Furman. Leave him alone."

"I saw him taking some musical instrument upstairs."

Nancy felt her cheeks flush. How many times did she have to tell that man no? A conspiracy dawned in her mind and she turned to question the young girl, but the only sign of her was the sound of prancing footsteps retreating down the hall.

Mosso

Harold shut the door behind him in room 612. He took a small wedge of wood out of his trouser pocket and kicked it under the door—leaning against his walker so as not to fall while on one foot.

Confident the door was secured, he turned to see Betty lying in the bed. She was sleeping—

how could she sleep with the awful hoses hanging from her limp arms and the chemicals coursing through her veins? She'd once told him how it burned. Now her skin was ashen and the only thing that remained of her once golden hair was a few white wisps slicked back against her scalp. He hated to see her like this, not that he looked much better—but the pain—how he would give anything to take the pain away; to take it upon himself. Was there some way?

He unhooked the bungee cord and lifted the keyboard. It was heavy and his arms strained under the weight. He placed it at the foot of the bed, careful not to bump Betty's feet, and pushed the power button.

The red light blinked on; Camille was right, it could work on batteries. Slowly, he plunked his fingers against the keys, trying to recall the notes. Dah, dum, dah, dum—that's it—through the fog of time gone by the notes came back to him and the crescendo of music revived him. Soon his fingers were gliding over the keyboard, effortlessly pounding out even the most difficult measures of Betty's favorite song.

Rubato

Harold looked up as he reached the end of the song. Betty was awake and looking at him, her tired eyes watery.

"You played for me," she said.

"They couldn't stop me."

"I knew you would."

"Haven't I always been there for you?"

"My best friend."

"Always."

Betty's eyes fluttered. Her pain was clear.

"They'll get you patched up. You'll feel better in no time," he said, willing it to be true.

"No. I'm ready."

"Don't say that."

"I can't take this anymore."

"Wherever you go, I'm coming after you."

"Don't be afraid. We are parts of the same song."

"I love you."

"Play for me."

Harold started again. This time the song came easily and he played vigorously as he wept. At once he was young again—that day on the beach, when they became one, and danced in the white sand as if love was their creation.

Presto

Harold played and played as Nurse Nancy rapped on the door, demanding he stop. Soon

Betty's eyes closed as she drifted back to sleep—and one day soon her eyes would close for the last time, but until then Harold would play. Until he could be with her again, he would play—driving the melody of the canon of their lives, repeating, intertwined, inseparable.



KATHY WIGUTOFF, *LOOKING BACK*, PHOTOGRAPH

THE FIRST THIRTY-SEVEN

D. R. HUTTON

NONFICTION

The first story I remember was about me following my father outside while he cut the lawn and picking up chopped-up snails from behind the lawn mower and eating them. I imagine I was three or four.

At school I learned several things. Don't trust anyone. No one will protect you. Adults want kids to shut-up and sit without fidgeting. Listen to them talk at you. Other kids, if they don't like you, will tie you to a telephone pole, pour gasoline over you and light you on fire, just to see you burn, or they will grab you, spread your legs and ram you into a steel pole causing you to lose a testicle. Or they will stone you while they chase you home, if you are a Jew, and then stone your door after you go through it.

I didn't like school much, almost flunked the second grade. Someone shot at me in Boy Scout camp a number of times, until I quit. My best friend fucked me in the ass and told his neighbor boys about it, who then called me a queer, took a girl home from the drive-in and two guys jumped in the car with knives drawn. I was held-up twice before I joined the army, who sent me to the honor-guard in Washington, where everyone was expected to stand at parade-rest until they fainted, which was a common occurrence. I didn't like the army much either, except for the drinking part. Army sent me to Japan, hung out with a regimental light-heavy weight, who turned me on to Jazz, told me where to go in Tokyo.

Got re-assigned to Korea. Got a small part in an army produced play about a Navy Captain who rotated steel balls in his hand when he talked. And

toured Korea, Japan, Okinawa, got drunk after each performance, fell in love with a whore in Tokyo, a very nice person, her Japanese mother had been a comfort-woman for the Japs somewhere overseas, maybe Manchuguo. Drank some absinthe, carried-on until time was up, got shipped back discharged in Oakland. Went to SF bought a suit at Brooks Brothers, shirt, tie, shoes, socks, flew home to LA drinking champagne flirted with the stewardess.

Lived in a cottage on my parents property, started back to school, got a night time job, bought a used car, couldn't stand any of it. Quit everything, piled my junk into the car headed for SF, lights didn't work, drove through the night without them, got there. No big deal, got a room, sold the car, sold rifles, shotgun, bought hamburger, saved it until it went bad, ate at Sally, where you had to listen to a bunch of shit before you got in line for a cup of greasy soup and an apple, where you had to listen to some fat guy say hey you wanta come up to my room after we eat, I've got a big hot-dog you could have, shit like that.

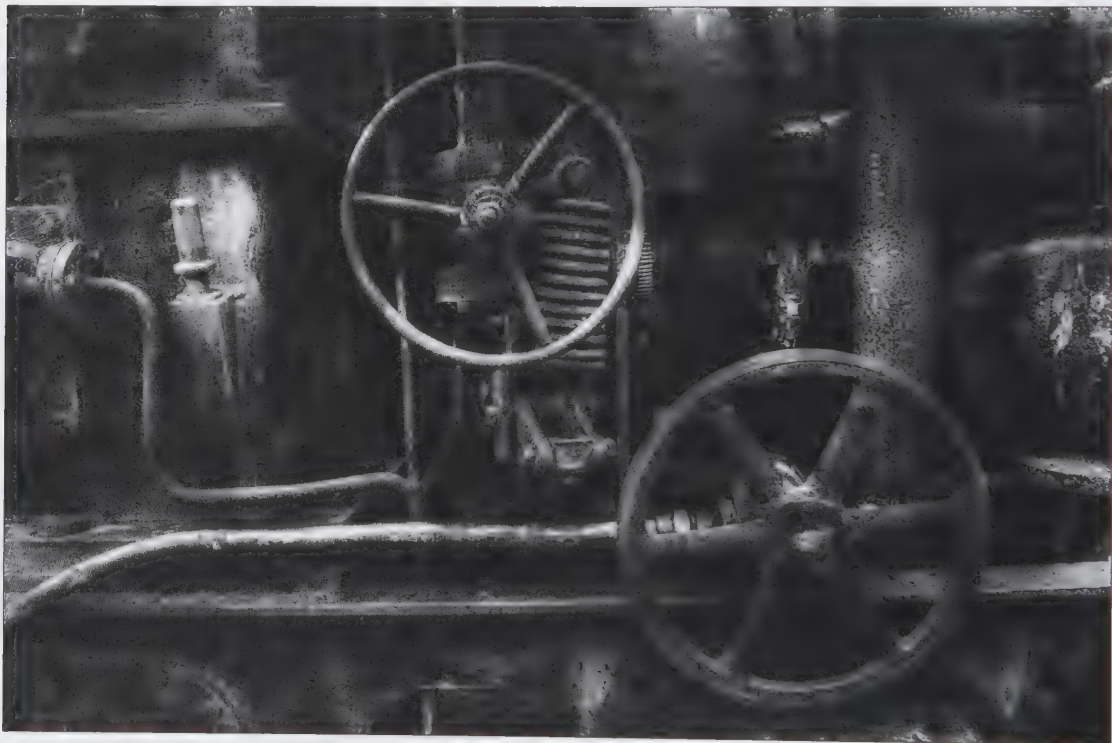
Got job at post office delivering packages, didn't know any of the streets, quit, got hired back as worker inside, quit again, tended bar, shipped out, went to seven or eight colleges, spent a year in NYC working as a computer operator at a bank, drove my motorcycle head-on into a yellow cab in Oakland, had to stop drinking for six months, made do with Demerol and smuggled in hash-brownies.

Got out, sued the cab company, took a trip to Mexico drank mescal, took a trip to Colorado

drank scotch, moved to Iowa, found a bar that served a ten cent tap beer every Wednesday afternoon until six pm where I would buy 1,000 beers, sit back, and watch the show. Learned a few things. That I never knew what was going to happen, until it happened, that I never knew what I was going to do until I did it. That I was dangerous to myself and others in a very dangerous world, part of which was of my own making. Stimulated myself, drove to San Francisco in two days.

Took a job at a school for the deaf, told the older boys they could no longer bugger the younger boys, quit before they could promote me to a daytime position and discover I came to work under the influence.

Returned to my parents house watched my father die. Took a job weighing seeds, took a job teaching school, got sober, clean. Shipped out. Still am.



TERRY SHUMAKER, *REDUCTION GEAR*, PHOTOGRAPH

HOW TO DISMANTLE AN OLD TAPE RECORDER FROM THE BASEMENT

AMELIE WELDEN

NONFICTION

Make sure the device is unplugged. This shouldn't be an issue since the recorder hasn't been used in more than twenty years. Press the eject button, and when the rectangle of smoky plastic remains stuck to the front interface, jam into it with a screwdriver. Pry.

Make the plastic bend, then crack. Make the plastic break into shards that fly against your eyelids and over your shoulders. Refuse to press the eject button at the same time as you work the screwdriver.

There may be a cassette inside, its holes still impaled by the player's turning mechanisms.

If so, you will know this before you begin. You will be able to see the tape, or maybe you will just know it's been there waiting for you

since years before, when you last slipped it over the playing knobs and clicked the plastic door closed.

Slide the tape out of the compartment. Grab onto the glossy brown strand of ribbon that runs along its base, and pull until you've unfurled a section as long as your arm. Repeat.

Listen to the whirl of the tape's inner gears. Watch the ribbon fall into a glittery, tangled pile. When you are finished, place the cassette on top of its insides.

Fit the screwdriver's blade into the narrow opening behind the tape compartment. Apply leverage until the backing gives way. Consider for a moment the careful arrangement of wheels, metal fittings, insulated wires. Continue.

A DIFFERENT PERCEPTION OF HISTORY

JOE WOOD

NONFICTION

History is typically viewed from a solely anthropocentric point of view. World War II ended in 1945, barely seventy years ago, but most people living today were not even born.

Yaquina Bay Bridge in Newport opened in 1936 to public traffic. Less than a hundred years old, it counts as a historical building.

In 1776, over two hundred years ago, Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence.

Leonardo da Vinci, arguably one of the greatest geniuses of all times, lived from 1452 to 1519, about five hundred years ago.

Looking back almost eight hundred years, Chinghis Khan died in 1227 after he conquered the largest land empire in human history.

Just over a thousand years have passed since the Norse explorer Leifur Eiriksson set foot on the New World as the first European.

Fifteen centuries ago, the Roman Empire was lying in its last throes.

Jesus Christ's death on the cross over two thousand years ago substantially altered the landscape of religion.

Alexander the Great was born 356 BC.

Legend or history, dependant on opinion, tells us that Romulus and Remus founded Ancient Rome 2764 years ago.

In 1303 BC, Ramesses II, considered the greatest and most powerful Egyptian pharaoh, was born.

Over 3550 years have passed since the first burial in the Valley of the Kings.

Radiocarbon testing suggests that Stonehenge is between 4200 and 4400 years old.

Close to 4600 years ago, the Egyptians finished building the Great Pyramid of Giza, the only still existing Wonder of the Ancient World.

At this time, Methuselah Tree has already been growing for more than two hundred years.

The currently oldest known tree on Earth of the species Bristlecone Pine stands on a barren hillside high in the White Mountains in Northern California. For almost five thousand years, this little tree has been struggling to stay alive. Its size, tiny compared to the Giant Sequoia General Sherman, the currently largest tree on Earth, is not impressive. The awe it inspires is in the mind. Humans need their imagination lingering through centuries long gone by and consider what has happened in history while this inconspicuous tree has been surviving for all these millennia. How many proudly erected buildings that impress people so much has Methuselah Tree outlived? Not even to mention many recorded human deeds that have been distorted, ignored, or glorified—always dependant on from what point of view they were written. For almost five thousand years, this little tree has seen the rise and fall of countless so-called leaders, many of whom were just cruel tyrants, and their empires, human technology, and knowledge that was achieved and forgotten again.

And still it's here, alive, surviving, and slowly growing.

Truly ancient history is just one state away in Northern California.



JOE WOOD, *BRISTLECONE PINE*, PHOTOGRAPH

KEEPING BROOKLYN

MICHAEL SORDLUVSKI

NONFICTION

I cannot after all keep a storm in my room.
-Kafka

Prelude

Late in the Brooklyn afternoon, on a day during the winter of my ninth year, I pulled my small wood and metal sled across slush covered streets toward Prospect Park. The snow had fallen several hours earlier so the whiteness was long gone. The streets were covered in brown frozen muck, concocted from snow, airborne pollutants and road dirt perfectly mixed by the spinning tires of thousands of cars and frozen by the frigid air. Here and there the mixture was highlighted by patches of pale yellow and intense orange, markings of the many dogs the largest borough had to offer. In the park, the snow still had its whiteness. I headed to a high hill that I knew well. The hill, whose name I cannot remember, was a well known sledding site. After several hours of sliding down and pulling my sled back up the hill, cold, wet and tired, fingers stiff and toes numb, I headed back home in delight. At the edge of the park, lurking behind a stand of tall trees, six boys waited for me, or for anyone else that might pass by. They offered to relieve me peacefully of my sled. I declined. Several minutes later as the invisible sun began to set, I returned home, sled-less and covered in several types of blood. This is my fondest memory of Brooklyn.

Ludicrous

The uncharacteristically strong electro-magnetic fields of the days before Saturn caused me to awake earlier than expected. Realizing that mag-

netizing carbon is a difficult task requiring several million pounds of pressure and extremely high temperatures, I did not attempt the task so early on that dew stained morning. Instead, I walked out, without tools or technological devices, in search of reality.

The town was smaller than usual due to the combination of unusually weak extra-terrestrial gravitation, which allowed the town's many objects to nudge ever so slightly closer together, and heavy smog resulting from a government sponsored dirty air day mandating all motorists to remove their catalytic converters for twenty-four hours. The impact of the smallness was not all negative as it enabled me to reach my destination several nanoseconds sooner than usual, although my lack of clock did not allow me to confirm this obvious fact.

I quickly smoked a cigarette after mercifully ripping off the filter and throwing it into the gravitational field of the cracked asphalt street just in time to be sucked into the exposed manifold of a red '67 Camaro being pursued by a one armed cop who had forgotten to turn off his left signal light. Fortunately, for drivers behind him, his physical condition required him to constantly turn toward the left. Unfortunately, for the pursuit of justice, it allowed the red Camaro to easily escape over a bridge spanning wet waters. These details were so vivid to me, I was told by the Environmental Protection Agency official standing beside me, because of my heightened perceptions, induced by increased inhalation of airborne pollutants. I asked the official if he would sign my ballot initiative to require all

automobile manufacturers to liberally sprinkle cannabis seeds deep within the bowels of all new and refurbished catalytic converters to provide all pedestrians with a permanent heightened sense of awareness. He agreed to sign it, but only anonymously. Later that day I gathered several thousand additional anonymous signatures. Unfortunately, I used a number two pencil, as I had been taught in third grade by Mrs. Wallachow, prompting the signature validation committee to nullify all the signatures on the grounds of their graphite content.

I stepped into the nearest tavern and ordered my morning beverages. After twenty-four ounces of black coffee and a few whisky chasers, I emerged no less disheveled than I had entered. A monk sitting in full lotus position on the street corner signaled his intentions to the traffic lights as they, in turn, signaled theirs to the passing automobiles. I asked him what he meant. He told me of his intent to capture the four forces on this corner of Twelfth and Main. I said Einstein had spent sixty years in a failed attempt to capture the four forces. Yes, he said carefully, but he was not Einstein and this certainly was not Princeton. I could only agree and ran across the street in a state of quantum uncertainty, emerging from the shadow into sunlight just in time for the noon bells to signal the arrival of lunch time. Bodily nourishment being my second mission, I slipped into a small roadside pub for bacon bits on white bread with globs of mayonnaise. From free range pig, mentioned the blue eyed chef. But was it kosher, I inquired. Not technically, but symbolically it had the markings of the sacred cow, he insisted. I left amazed at the midday moon hovering without ballast above the steam soaked streets of this little town. Perhaps it is a town that has lost its destiny, or has found it. In any case it is of no consequence as the imminent earthquake will wipe it off its pilings and wash it into the vast river below and eventually out to sea.; to a sea from which all has come and to which all must return. The infinite cycle of creation and destruction that is contained within the bottomless salt waters can only bring me closer or further. I stand breathless, in anticipation of the rising tides of time.

Suddenly, I realized it was time for lunch. Metaphysical musings ceased as I searched for burgers. I found a small grease infested cubby hole of a luncheonette and ordered a 3/16 pounder—the burger of choice in lean economic times—making up for the missing 1/16 pound by ordering an extra large portion of lard injected fries. Waiting for my order, I remarked to the high heeled waitress that only a few months ago I had been an upstanding vegetarian, eating only choice sprouts and myriad soy derivatives. What brings you in here then, she asked. Reminding her that I spoke of my vegetarianism in the past perfect tense, I related to her in long drawn out monotones the story of my trip to the country where for the first time in my life I had seen actual cows, not just pictures on milk cartons and packages of French cheese. There I stood in a vast sea of green grass sprinkled with white, black and brown cows, huge utters dangling in the gentle breeze, calling softly to each other in their cow voices, when I was struck intoxicatingly hard by an epiphany in shades of gray. A cow is a vegetable I saw, standing firmly rooted in a field of green, sucking in vast quantities of leafy green grass. It is the ideal vegetable; able to roam the earth in search of truth and falseness that composes its condition. Indeed it is the same truth and falseness that composes the human condition—a condition of circumlocutory enunciations marked by opposing dyads of birth-death, lunar-solar, thing-thinglessness, zero-infinity. In the set of all sets there is a set that contains all sets. But does it contain itself? It must, yet it cannot. It is the paradox of this human condition. It is the paradox of the cow. I am startled from my thoughts by the strong glare of the waitress delivering my lunch. After soaking it heavily in vast quantities of ketchup I devour it with a minimum of chews, ignoring the deeply imbedded advice of my long gone grandmother who insisted I chew each mouthful thirty-two times—two to the power of five, a number held in high esteem by the ancient Gonadians of the Island Nations in the Sea. The town bells again strike an indeterminate number of times as I leave in search of questions without answers and answers without meaning.

Postlude

On a winter morning in Brooklyn, during my year in the third grade, I ran to the corner store clutching a dollar bill in my hand. A few moments later, I emerged with four superhero comic books. Walking home with my eyes buried in the comics, I did not notice the six boys waiting for

me in the middle of the block. They offered to peacefully take the comics from my possession. Unsure how six could equitably share four objects, I refused their invitation. I returned home, over ice covered concrete, comic-less and covered in seven types of blood. On that day, I first became aware of the great mysteries of humanity.



KRISTIN SHAUCK'S CCC PAINTING CLASS, *AUTO POP MURAL*, ACRYLIC

THE COLOR OF SUNSET

KAREN R. HESSEN

FICTION

On Monday, the second day of creation week, God created an expanse above the waters and he called it "sky." He thought, *This sky is good, but dreary. It needs to be brightened up a bit.* So, on Wednesday, the fourth day, after separating the continents from the seas, God set the sun, moon and stars in place. *This, too, is good,* he mused. On Saturday, the seventh day, after creating all that lives, plants and animals of all kinds, God went to the coast to rest. God sat on the sand with his feet in the water, pondering all he had made. Eventually, the sun began to settle into the horizon before him. *This is somewhat boring. Even I will tire of this constantly revolving light scheme after a few hundred years. I believe I can do better. When I am not busy tending the creatures, I will spend some time adding color and brilliance to this vast expanse that covers everything I have formed.*

The artist had begun his masterpiece when I found an empty bench at Seaside's Turnaround. His immense canvas already contained a periwinkle blue sky that faded to white where it met the slate colored Pacific Ocean 2.9 miles to the west at the horizon. The artist had lightly brushed clouds in place, pewter high above, paling to cottonball beige, which appeared to have been blown in place by the breeze. The canvas arched around a fluorescent solar orb making its slow descent toward the sea.

As the sun continued to set, its longer rays, in the red and orange spectrum of colors, began to replace the peaceful blue hues. While I watched, the unseen artist repainted the sky yellow; the pewter clouds a darker charcoal and the pale ones hovering just over the horizon were changed to gray. Ripples on the sea's surface were daubed tentatively with the

lemony color of the sky. The sun's glint took on the luster of 24 karat gold as the kaleidoscope of color continued to turn and dazzle both residents and visitors who gathered to watch the work of art unfold.

Like snowflakes of winter, no two sunsets are ever the same.

The golden sky was transitioned by the artist's brush to apricot. Clouds sitting on the surface of the water blackened giving the illusion of a distant mountain range rising from the Pacific. The bottoms of the dark clouds overhead flushed pink as they reflected the hues of the blushing sky.

The sun gradually melded into the ocean until only its crown peeked above the water's surface. It spread its train across the deep toward the shore. The artist brushed over the apricot paint with a thin layer of smoke gray and mixed pigment with the deepening blush on the clouds to create a brazen carrot orange. As the color infused the clouds it continued to spread across the empty expanse, casting the entire canvas in its radiance. A squadron of pelicans flew southward across the skyline in black silhouette as if in tribute to the fading day.

This is good, the artist thought while he brushed violet paint onto the darkening clouds. *But this is Oregon. The people here respect and enjoy the environment I have created for them. There must be a color these spectators will embrace. I will craft an exquisite shade just for them.* Taking out his palette he began to add color and mix, dabbing a little spot of paint off to the side now and then in test. When he thought it was perfect he began to cover the expanse between the purple clouds with pink-orange brilliance.

"Ah! Lovely! Gorgeous!" I heard the people around me say. "Tonight at sunset we have salmon skies."

WHY GOD CRIES IN OREGON

JAYMES CONDON

When asked about the color of the skies,
I told her God is happy when he's blue;
And when it rains, of course, that's when he cries;
And watch out—thunder means he's mad at you.

She asked me, "Why's he never happy here?
How come he always cries in Oregon?
Is it because those people by the pier
With cardboard never get to see the sun?

Is it because we're cutting down his trees?
Is that the reason why he's crying, Dad?
Or maybe all the squirrels, deer, and geese
We're killing are the reason he's so sad?"

I looked at her, surprised, with an "I guess,"
And knelt and hugged her dearly, saying, "Yes."

A BREAKFAST VILLANELLE

AMELIE WELDEN

He spooned his eggs up from the plate
And she wondered, Why a spoon?
This was the way he always ate,

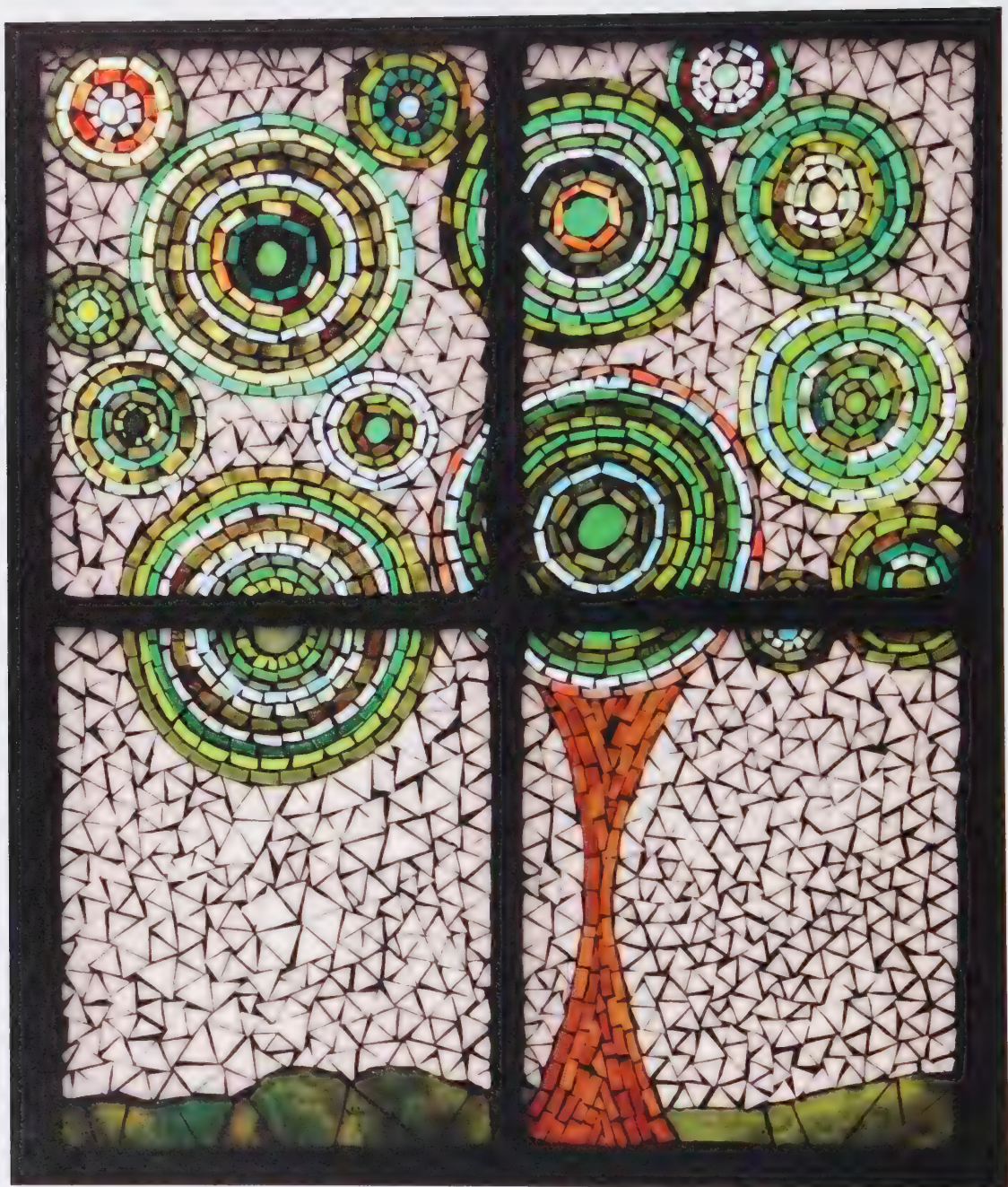
Treating omelets and hashbrowns like obstinate
Bowls of soup or mounds of mascarpone.
He spooned his eggs up from the plate

As she watched and tried to evaluate
If she'd rather eat alone.
This was the way he always ate,

But the strangeness that used to be charming and quaint
Had grown banal and overdone.
He spooned his eggs up from the plate

While small beads of water collected weight
At the lip of his glass and streamed down.
This was the way he always ate.

She ran a finger along the straight
Edge of her fork before her breakfast was gone.
He spooned his eggs up from the plate.
This was the way he always ate.



ANNIE FLETCHER, *TREE*, GLASS MOSAIC

GOT IT SONNET

CLAUDE HITE

the night blew like a river through the sky
and starlight bent upon the running waves
a sailing moon was mirrored in my eye
beside the things that everybody saves
and all I did was look upon the dark
while walking by from one now to the next
somehow that time my looking hit the mark
the random flow of things became a text
a sign or hieroglyphic that contained
in codes of pieces all the single one
you understand though it is not explained
the way you step outside to feel the sun
you understand and know you'll never know
then turn away and on your way you go

ARCH CAPE

BROWNSMEAD

BAY CENTER

BEERMAN CREEK

CULLABY LAKE

ALDERBROOK

ALTOONA

BAY CITY

BEAVER

BRADLEY

ASTORIA

ECOLA

DEEP RIVER

CANNON BEACH

CATHLAMET

KNAPPTON COVE

CLATSKANIE

HAMLET

CHINOOK

GEARHART

GARIBALDI

NEHALEM

EMERALD HEIGHTS

ILWACO

GNAT CREEK

HEBO

JOHN DAY

NEAHKAHIE

PUGET ISLAND

MANZANITA

LEWIS N CLARK

NEMAH

OYSTERVILLE

MILES CROSSING

JEFFERS GARDEN

RAYMOND

NASELLE

ROCKAWAY

SOUTH BEND

STRINGTOWN

SEASIDE

OLNEY

SURFSIDE

SALMON CREEK

SKAMOKAWA

WARRENTON

VERNONIA

THE COVE

SURF PINES

TILLAMOOK

TOLOVANA

WHEELER

UPPERTOWN

YOUNGS RIVER

SUNSET BEACH

WILLAPA BAY

UNIONTOWN

NEIGHBORS & NEIGHBORHOODS

SECTION



JAMES BARNES, STREETSCAPES: THEN & NOW, MONTAGE

REINHOLD MESAPAY

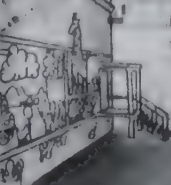
The Sun
CLUB BY CLO



The Sen. Astor & Astoria



Flow out



Lawns and stone
ambassadors
HISTORY

UPPERTOWN

East to Alderbrook
place of Ghadar Party
the Hindu Alley

Tongue P
Village

OUT



NEETS THE PAPER

Astoria Neighborhoods



ELIATSOP

STATE FOREST

in the FOREST
impossible

WANKET

ASTORIA FRAGMENTS

SCOTT T. STARBUCK

A few cherry leaves remain
as salmon die in the river.

Some boats left port
and never returned.

A poster in the Crest Motel
shows 234 local shipwrecks.

On the pier, my blond leans
into shadow like a mermaid.

Up the hill, baked cinnamon
wafts from the Blue Scorcher.

On docks along the Columbia
winter comes late.

Far beyond street lamps, "star-berries"
fill vacant branches.

Their distant light makes
dead ones shine as much as the living.



LUCIEN SWERDLOFF, AMCCO 1030, PHOTOGRAPH



LUCIEN SWERDLOFF, AMCCO 1048, PHOTOGRAPH



NOEL THOMAS, *JOHN NAPPING II*, WATERCOLOR

MR. MAY—A NEIGHBORHOOD HERO

PATRICIA HAINLINE

NONFICTION

It was a warm summer morning and as I tried to bathe the baby, Charlie, while supervising two-year-old Carrie, my older children, Leslie and David, aged three and five, were clamoring for a walk around the block. Since Charlie's birth three months earlier it seemed as though I seldom had time to enjoy such spur-of-the-moment activities with the children, and had it not been for our next-door neighbor, Mr. May, the children would have had to give up their occasional walks. So when he appeared on the front step that morning asking if the children could walk with him, it was not clear to me which of us was doing the favor. He was that kind of man; always helping someone, but at the same time enjoying himself.

Mr. May never contributed to the advance of medical science, was neither a great humanitarian nor politician. In fact, he was not even famous in our own small town. But to me, and I'm sure to everyone who knew him, Mr. May was a hero.

Although he would never tell us his age, Mr. May was surely in his mid-seventies. He seemed almost six feet tall; deep blue eyes peered out of his gaunt face which although weatherbeaten and whiskery, had a gentle look about it. He was a retired farmer who had moved to town—his lawn was weedless, the back-yard vegetable garden huge and prolific. Well-groomed cherry, plum and pear trees bore bumper crops every year.

Since we seldom saw Mr. May working outside, we wondered at first how all this came about, but it became apparent that, according to the habits of a lifetime, Mr. May arose and "did the chores" at five in the morning, finishing his

day's work by eight-thirty. At nine o'clock he was invariably sitting on his back porch when Leslie and David rushed out to say good morning. Mr. May and the children developed a ritual wherein Mr. May saved his daily harvesting until they arrived to follow him around while he picked the squash, tomatoes, cherries or whatever was in season. Then each would have a sample, the children then bringing home enough for a meal, since he raised far more than he and his wife could consume. I shall always believe that my children learned a respect for other people's property in this way, for neither of them would have dreamed of even pulling up a carrot without Mr. May's special invitation.

After the daily harvest, Mr. May took his walk. He walked far, and was sometimes gone for hours, but at least once a week he knocked at our door to ask if "the little ones" would like to go for a walk. Each would take a hand and off they went, chattering and laughing, to be gone for 30 minutes exactly. Sometimes on these walks they picked up other children, and neighbors often reported seeing Mr. May and six or seven children walking on the street. The children were all well behaved, did not run off or disobey him, and although there were no sidewalks, mothers never worried about their children when they walked with Mr. May. He tended the children as he did his plants, with much love.

The first autumn we lived next to Mr. May he became shocked because we did not care for our three apple trees properly. The next spring he showed up one morning with his plastic raincoat, hat and boots, and announced his intention to

spray our apple trees. Three or four times that summer he sprayed them, and when the time came to thin the apples he brought his ladder over and offered to hold it for my husband, Dean, while he did his thinning. So, thanks to Mr. May, we had apples galore during those years.

Well informed on everything concerning agriculture, Mr. May cultivated even the county agent. "I think I'll go pick Mr. Stanley's brains and see if I can get my corn to grow better." This was his favorite method of gathering information, and when Dean offered to pay him for spraying our fruit trees he replied he was "just being neighborly," but if Dean did not mind, he would pick his brains the next time the pump went haywire. Thus developed a mutually beneficial partnership, my mechanically-inclined husband maintaining Mr. May's pump while Mr. May pampered our fruit trees into healthy, prolific plants.

It was nice having a man in the neighborhood during the day. One morning when our son David was two, his head became stuck between the boards of the fence separating our house and Mr. May's. My tugging, twisting and turning was of no avail, so in desperation I sent Leslie in to get Mr. May, who brought a hammer and crowbar, calmly pried off the offending board and released my squalling toddler.

Another time David succeeded in squeezing

his entire body through the back fence and struck off across a field to the next street. By the time I missed him he had disappeared, but Mr. May heard me calling for David and immediately organized a neighborhood search. Boys on bicycles appeared from nowhere, offering Mr. May their services and he dispatched them in various directions. David was found shortly, not more than two blocks from home, scared and lost until he spotted Mr. May striding towards him.

A few years later when our other son, Charlie, was two and got his head stuck in the same fence as David had, Mr. May figured he was "coming full circle, now," and confidently expected to launch an elaborate search for Charlie before long.

We moved reluctantly from that town because Mr. May had been a grandfather to us all and the most "neighborly" gentleman we had known. For years after that, the children could not spot a cherry tree in bloom without remarking, "Remember when Mr. May used to give us cherries?" My husband planted summer squash every year because we learned to like it from Mr. May's garden. And I have never forgotten Mr. May's kindly references to "the little ones" and his gentle support during the days when I had four children under five and precious little spare time.



NIZINA COOK (AGE 5), *THE ROAD TO THE COLUMN*, PEN ON PAPER

HIGHWAY 26

VICKI CLARK

This is the highway where autumn leaves always fall
Where five shades of orange can be seen in one tree
This is the highway where families ride in packed cars
Where night skies dance with stars
And salt air sends life's stresses to sea.

Thousands of people travel this road
Intent on dipping their toes in the sand
No head-on collisions to make cars explode
This highway just leads to the beach
No reaper extends his grim reach.

This is the highway where wrecks never happen
Where a young mother I loved did not perish
This is the highway where trees intertwine
Where no sirens whine
Sights captured are sometimes to cherish.

THE LATINOS OF CLATSOP COUNTY

PATRICIA AGUILAR MORRISSEY & EILEEN "PERCY" PURCELL, EDITORS

NONFICTION

The Latinos of Clatsop County Oregon, published by the Lower Columbia Hispanic Council in 2012, takes a closer look at experiences of the Hispanic community in Clatsop County. Excerpted below are just a few of numerous interviews collected by Patricia Aguilar Morrissey and Eileen "Percy" Purcell, former and current CCC employees who play an active role in the local Hispanic community. *RAIN Magazine* is pleased to honor and celebrate Percy's and Patricia's efforts to shed light on the many contributions our Latino neighbors make in the Columbia Pacific region. Section designed by CCC student Allison Todd.

Erick Hernández

STUDENT



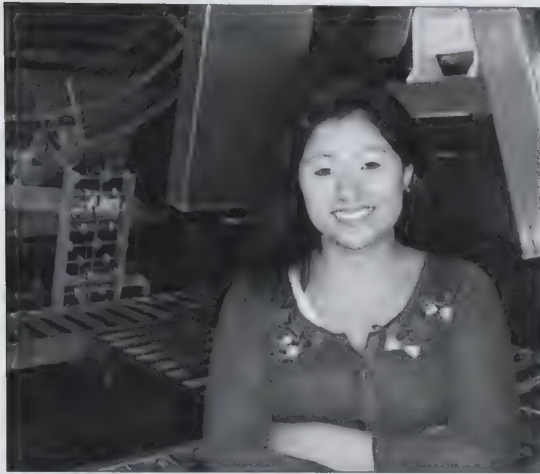
I have been in the Astoria area for eleven years and I have been at Clatsop Community College for two years. I am getting an automobile technician degree. I would like to work at a shop first to get more experience fixing cars and in the future try to open my own business. I am from Mexico City. My parents always told me that the higher the education the more successful I could be and the more life opportunities I could get. They want me to be more successful than they were. My parents are full-time parents and full-time

employees; they work together at a hotel. My dad is head of housekeeping and of maintenance and my mother is a housekeeper. I live in Cannon Beach. I want to stay in this area because I see that we need more bilingual automotive technicians to help out the (Hispanic) community.

I am the oldest son in my family and I want to be an example to my brother and sister. They were born here, they were raised here and they have all the opportunities that I don't have. So, I want them to see that since I don't have the opportunities that they might have I am still successful in life and that they should take advantage of the opportunities they have and be more successful in the future. The last two years I have been here at Clatsop Community College I have had scholarships from private corporations and community groups. I have to stay at grade point average of 3.0 or better, but my goal is to be at 4.0 so I can apply for scholarships. I also work part time during my vacations and weekends to pay for school, gas, and food. I volunteer anywhere that I can when I am not working or going to school. If I can do it I will do it. I volunteered for the Ford Family Foundation, for The Wishing Tree Program which gives Christmas presents during the Christmas season, I have helped tutor kids in high school, volunteered in the labs helping Hispanic students and have volunteered for the Hispanic Council.

Argelia Méndez

HUMAN RESOURCES



I arrived in the US in 1998. I was twelve and I was going to turn 13; in fact I turned thirteen here. We arrived in the Tillamook area. My father was already working in a dairy business, where they milk cows. I started going to Junior High and then I went to High School. We are originally from Veracruz, from the port area, and I was saying, I arrived as a young girl and after two years in Tillamook we moved to Ilwaco. I graduated in 2003. I started at Clatsop Community College here in Astoria and that's when I started driving Ilwaco-Astoria, Astoria-Ilwaco. I did not start to work here in Oregon until I met Jeri Johnson. She introduced me to this type of work because she saw bilingual potential that is not common in this area. Many do not speak English and Spanish perfectly. Then I graduated from CCC and, it seems that at the same time, I started to work for Pacific Coast, the cannery in Warrenton. I only worked there for about two months because Jeri had heard about DaYang Seafoods and she was leaving the cannery and wanted me to go with her. I had an interview, they liked what they heard and in 2006 I was hired. I started in Human Resources, hiring people, answering phones, doing the basics to have people in a cannery on time for processing.

What I like the most (in this area) is how

peaceful it is because I have lived in Los Angeles and did not like it at all. I started to miss the area: the peacefulness and the harmony around the people, people that help each other, be it Americans or Hispanics. There is not so much violence, I would say. It is a peaceful area; an area in which to raise a family. I don't like the fact that it rains six, seven months of the year. I am from a tropical area, Veracruz, where it is sunny and rains once a year. After a while you start to like it, you don't mind the rain so much.

I would like to see Hispanics in the area reach better work options than what we have now. We work the most common jobs with minimum wage. We can only achieve that through education. I would like to see Latinos attending school more and finishing college. I hope to finish college; I only have two years left. When I have the time and enough resources, I think I am going to go back. It is something that I have in mind and I will finish it. I think that if we do not have education there is no desire to move forward and to have greater aspirations than what we have. This year I was promoted to the area of logistics in shipping and handling. I will be talking to shipping and trucking companies, we'll see how I do. My job is from 8am to 5pm. Not all Mexicans have the privilege of choosing a schedule from 8 to 5. I think the American Dream is to have an 8 to 5 job and then go home and enjoy your family in the evening. It is a goal of mine to go back to school and finish it and get a better quality of life.

Whenever you are working with foreign people that are not American they do not see you as the foreigner; here we are all the same. My boss is from Taiwan, his sister is the accountant and the plant manager is from Korea and that makes four of us... I don't feel so different from being Latina here; they are from another country too so they see you as the same. We are all from the outside. You can see the problem if I were working in an environment with Americans. Americans make you feel more like you are the outsider and wonder what are you doing here, not like, "Oh, you are from around here".

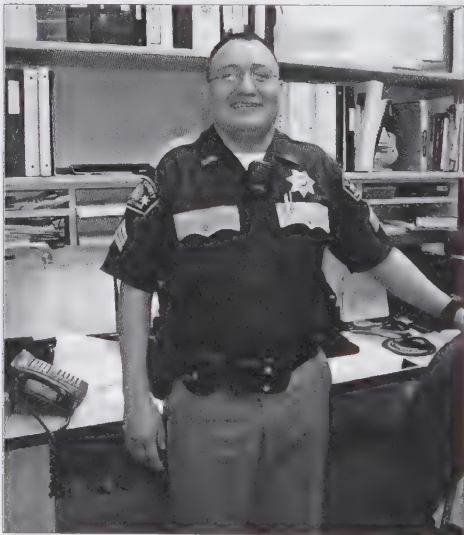
We have 99.9 % Latinos working here. Once in a while we get one American or two. They

don't like the hours, they don't like the pay and they are not reliable. The ones that come to work don't have transportation and cannot come to work. Over the years, I have been here five years, I have seen at least 3 American guys who work hard and steady and are very hard workers. If they don't come back, it means they got a better job. Every once in a while you get really good American workers that don't mind getting dirty or the type of hours because here we are always processing in evening times or early morning hours; you go home at 6am. But during 8am to 5pm nobody is processing, everybody is sleeping. They are driving to work at 10pm. Our Mexican workers are older people and young people and middle aged people; we get all.

I consider myself Mexican because I look Mexican: dark skin, dark hair. Ethnically, I am Mexican but culturally, I am American. I am glad that I care and that I mean something to this community and that I am making a difference; that is very important to me.

Ignacio Talancón Piñón

CLATSOP COUNTY SERGEANT



My name is Ignacio Talancón Piñón and I am a sergeant with the Clatsop County Sheriff's

Office. I arrived in Astoria in September of 1988. My sisters had already arrived from Mexico and they brought me here. I did not speak any English. I took my GED at Washington State University in January of 1989. Then, I was offered a scholarship to Washington State University, but could not take it because I did not speak English. My school adviser told me there was a Job Corps here in Astoria and that he recommended that program and so I came back to Astoria. I graduated from Tongue Point Job Corps as a word processing operator in January of 1991.

I applied for a job in a bank which is what I knew how to do and when I realized that I was not going to be very productive in that area because I needed better English skills, I decided to apply to Clatsop Community College in the fall of 1994. I graduated with a degree in Criminal Justice in 1997. Bob Ellsberg, the Criminal Justice instructor helped me a lot; he is the reason I am here. I started working for Clatsop County in 1998. The Hispanic community has changed; lots of people that I used to know are not here anymore. I would like to see more Hispanics involved in law enforcement in Astoria. There are many opportunities and possibilities. One of the reasons why I learned English is to help other people. I have seen that in the new Hispanic generations there is not a lot of motivation to learn Spanish. And some people that speak English only speak English. I have seen several families who when I ask, "Hey, your son does not speak Spanish?" they answer, "No, he does not want to speak it." That bothers me. I tell them, You don't know what you are missing. The more you know the better you will be able to compete."

The Astoria area can be very calm or very bad, depending on what the people do. We have the liberty to choose the right or the wrong path. I have met many that say that in Astoria there is nothing to do but if we are here, we have to move towards the future and take advantages and opportunities given to us. Astoria has a lot more opportunities than what people think but one has to look for them. I think this area has a lot to offer.

I used to complain about living in this place (Astoria) because it was too quiet for me. However, as

years go by I have adapted and every day Astoria seems more and more like my town in México: Pátzcuaro. We have warmer weather there but everything is green like in Astoria. There are many roads here that to me look exactly like the roads that take me into Pátzcuaro. I see these roads and I take them on purpose and it is as if I were in my hometown.

Alma Castelán

CRAB SHAKER



We came to work in Pasco, Washington, in '96. First, we worked with asparagus, then we did apples and then cherries. We came from Hidalgo, Mexico. From Hidalgo we came to Pasco and there we started to pick asparagus. That kind of work is very difficult, very hard for us. We would leave (our house) at four in the morning to arrive at the field at five thirty, at dawn, because we lived far away and we started very early. We would tie a bucked to our waist and we would spend all day bent over and always very hot. There were no Americans. Only Mexicans. I would think, "Why are things so difficult for us?" Because we Mexicans face discrimination I have thought that there are maybe people that do bad things but the Mexicans came to work hard and we are the ones that suffer the most here. Like

in the asparagus harvest: Back then, I worked 4 asparagus seasons and I also worked in the apple season. In those four seasons I did not see a single American picking, only Mexicans. Then we were very tired of so much work and very heavy work and they did not pay well. We suffered much because it gets very hot and we were bent over and the rows are long. We were not even hungry, we drank only water. I told my husband, "We have to change jobs because this one is too hard." And he thought to come here to the fish and crab seasons. And season after season we would work in asparagus, apples and then fish.

I continue working in Bornstein; I am a crab shaker. We work there all year; they freeze. It is difficult work because it is hard for our hands; we shake hard the whole time. Also, we are all Mexicans. I think there may be two Americans working there but all the other crab shakers are Mexicans. Right now my husband is out of work, he does not have year round work only seasonal "cannery" work or potato harvesting in Pasco, WA.

When we first came here we were not used to the place but then we liked Astoria very much. It is quiet for the kids to school, it is peaceful. Astoria is beautiful, I like it. I like this place a lot because my kids go to school and they are happy and pay attention. I like that Eric, who is intelligent at school, is almost 16 now; he is in 11th grade. Abigail is very good at school; she likes to read and likes to chat. They have told me at school that she chats too much, they have called me twice, they tell her, "Abi, calm down" and she continues to chat and gets into trouble. But she does well in school. Right now the teacher tells me that they might have her skip a grade because she knows a little bit more and finishes her work quickly. They are going to give her more work. She loves to play the violin. She plays at school and she practices here at home. She takes violin classes at school but I got a letter saying that I may want to pay for private violin classes for her. It is an hour a week but it costs \$50.00. It is very expensive, I can't pay that amount, but I was told you pay by the hour. Plus, she needs a bigger violin and I cannot buy it for her.

RAIN GUITAR

MATT LOVE

NONFICTION

The rain blew into Astoria on a Sunday in December and I relished every liquid nugget. Dusk was brewing and I was driving around town praying for a rain story to emerge in one of the great rain cities of the world. I wanted it to fall right on top of me.

I cruised down Alameda and past the Doughboy Monument. The Megler Bridge utterly bored me with its linebacker stockiness. I kept moving east down the main drag, Marine Drive, searching, probing, looking, seeking a rain story. Being new to town and the midst of a rare winter drought, I was thirsty for one.

To my right, I saw a diminutive woman walking into a convenience store. She held a huge umbrella of clear plastic that appeared almost cartoonish in nature. It was so large and she was so small that the umbrella engulfed her down to her knees. It was a whole little universe inside there. I whipped out the camera but missed the shot so I kept moving east.

And there he was, like I had conjured him. I saw him standing on the sidewalk in front of McDonalds, a youngish 20-something year old man sporting a floppy hat, blue windbreaker, rain pants, and a coiffed red mullet worthy of an effeminate Viking.

Standing is the wrong, inadequate verb. He had ear buds in and was shredding the air guitar

with such ferocity in the rain that I knew I had to meet this mystic metal man. I made an abrupt turn left and circled around. The camera came out and I got a murky shot through the streaked window. The rain fell harder and he took his shredding to 11, 12, 13. His was running scales all over the frets. He was kicking out with his left foot and then right. He was throwing his hair around like Soundgarden circa 1992. I had never seen anyone play air guitar like this in public, let alone in a driving December rainstorm on the Oregon Coast. He was born to rain. He was a real deal rain heavy metal video in real time. He blew away those wimpy hair metal bands from the MTV 1980s and their faux rain that always poured during the power ballads.

I had to meet him. I had to know the name of the song that had driven him mad. I waited for traffic to ease up so I could bolt across Highway 101 and meet the master rain shredder.

Suddenly he was on the move, wanking an epic solo as skipped. He headed into McDonalds and I couldn't possibly follow him in there; the smell of industrial meat after fresh rain would have induced instant vomiting in me.

Shred on Rainmaster! Long may you shred in Astoria rain. One day, I will find you and kneel on the wet ground in your honor. You have much to teach me.



RICHARD ROWLAND, *COMMUNITY BOWLS*, PHOTOGRAPH



RICHARD ROWLAND, *BENEATH THE SURFACE*, PHOTOGRAPH

THE GARDENERS NEXT DOOR

REBA OWEN

Doctor Wilson, the obstetrician

Cared for begonias and women's woes,
Like fine pastries and confections all.
His paths were lined with magnolias,
White and lush as throats and thighs,
While his own wife was plain and brown as dust.
He just fell asleep, dreaming of lace and laughter.

Tony, the policeman,

Grew corn as tall as first and steeples,
Covered with kernels that popped on touch.
A fungus from Guadalcanal filled his stomach
Until he was dead.
Undaunted, his wife kept him in a jar
Rather than spread him in the rows as he had wanted.

Frank, the electrician,

Trained and trimmed his nectar berries and wives.
One day he short-circuited, chased his fourth with a sharpened hoe
Past the sumptuous red and gold snapdragons,
And scared all the children playing in the street.
No one knows what happened after that.

Ken, the bar pilot,

Grafted pink and white hawthorn on the same tree
And asked what did we think about this and that while he staked his dahlias big
as a plate
And voted no on each tax rate
Until his kidneys, misdiagnosed
Did him in.

Grampa Fred, the Navy man,
Grew peace roses big as cabbages.
Filbert and red winter pears soldiered through his field.
When cancer rescued him from the veterans' home,
His belongings were shared equally among the heirs,
Except for a squabble over a maple nutcracker
In the shape of a nude woman.



BROOKLYNN ANDREWS, *UNTITLED*, PHOTOGRAPH



Belinda

BELINDA CONTRERAS



Sara

SARA MICKELSON



Lucero

LUCERO BURMUDEZ



J.R.

J.R. RUSSELL

HAUNTED HOUSES, INK & CRAYON

LITTLE FLUTE BOY

SHANE BLISS

NONFICTION

I once knew this kid back in grade school—he was short, naive, and high-pitched just like everyone else his age. People picked on him because he was an easy target; this guy was blind as a bat and had no idea that everyone else could see farther than a foot in front of their face. This didn't allow him to grow his social skills very well; trying to understand that someone was making fun of you by using sarcasm and giving a smug look was quite difficult when he had a very slim grasp on the concept itself. He loved the art of music, and when he was presented with the option to start learning a marching band instrument at Long Beach Middle School one year before joining the Ilwaco band, he took it. He picked up a flute without the slightest regard as to what people would think of him. A transition from Long Beach Middle School to Ilwaco Middle-High School was underway, and we're going to take a trip down memory lane through my eyes—my eyes before I finally understood that I needed glasses. That kid was me. That's right; I was blurry-eyed male flautist.

Why did I choose the flute to become my introductory instrument? During a small intro-to-band meeting at Long Beach Middle School, I was allowed to see and try all kinds of different instruments. They ranged from tiny piccolos to enormous baritone saxophones, all of which I wanted to play equally. Since I had quit every sport I tried up to this point, my parents decided that they would rather not spend a lot of money on an instrument I may end up just getting bored with. My older half-sister told my parents that she had an old flute sitting in her closet from when

she was in a music phase. The thought of a free instrument was music to my parents' ears. I didn't care that it was a flute; in fact, I really didn't understand the concept of why it was weird for a guy to play it. I had met one other male flautist in my life, although I can't remember his name; I do remember the message he tried to offer to me. His face lit up after I had told him I was learning to play the flute; he told me, "I've only met a handful of male flute players; I hope that you stick with it! Don't be discouraged to play just because you're a guy; most people won't understand that an instrument is just an instrument until they see you play it," I responded with a quick, "Okay. Thank you!" Not understanding the part about being a guy. He pulled out his flute and played a bit of a song or two, inspiring me to continue playing the flute even more.

I entered the doors of Ilwaco Middle-High School in 7th grade. Since it was such a small school, there were no requirements to join the pep-band in the same year a new band teacher had started; she invited everyone that was even slightly interested to join with open arms. Most of the people in the class were juniors and seniors; it was a little overwhelming. I was put into the flute section with five other girls, all of whom were older than me. Three of the girls were a grade ahead of me; the other two were two grades ahead of me and generally kept to themselves. What I remember most about that first year was my huge crush on the trio of girls. They were all very pretty, and I always tried my best to not embarrass myself in front of them. Let's just say that everyone quickly found out about my

crush. Initially, most people had just assumed that I was gay because I didn't do anything athletic, still had a high-pitched voice, was very flamboyant and played the flute. People began to tease me about these things on a daily basis; I didn't really mind it much at first; you're bound to get picked on in your first year. It was around the start of the second year that really got to me.

The people who picked on me from the previous year had started to call me a "fag" right to my face; it became my nickname for a few of them. Naive as I was, I just kept saying things like, "No, I like girls!" and "I'm not a fag!" The three girls I sought after had also started to pick on me at this point. They would pretend to give off a sign of affection to me just to make the others laugh. After all of that, I still stuck with the flute. I wanted people to acknowledge my skill after playing a song and not immediately ask me why I play the flute. I never actually reached that point. In fact, I decided to not play the flute the following year after our band accompanied the basketball team made it into the state championships. We weren't at the tournament for long, but I found my way into some trouble. Before our team's match started, the band was relaxing in the arcade area. Coming back from the bathroom, I stopped to talk with a few of the other band members. Before I could even open my mouth, I was hoisted up and quickly tossed into a trash can by a fellow band member. I squirmed to get out while everyone laughed with guilt. Randy helped me out of the trashcan, but he was also the one who pushed me in to begin with. He was laughing a lot; I think the conversation went something like this: Randy said, "Are you okay? Hah, I didn't

mean to actually push you in."

"Yeah, I'm okay," I muttered.

"I was just trying to scare you," he said with a shamed smile, "I fell and dropped you in, I'm sorry."

I said, "It's okay," and walked off to the other part of the arcade, away from everyone else. I still played my flute that day, it didn't matter that I was embarrassed to stand with everyone who had seen me get pushed into the trash. I needed to play my instrument and go home. I switched to alto saxophone in the next year.

A lot of things changed for me that freshman year. My voice dropped, I picked up a "manlier" instrument, grew a bit taller and finally got some glasses. I stopped chasing the three flautists and joined the jazz band. I never did see that male flautist again, and I'm glad I haven't. How would it have made him feel if I told him I quit playing the flute because I was being made fun of? His advice just didn't work for me in the end. I realized that I had to become respectable to be respected, so I quit band altogether and decided to focus on my schoolwork. A girl had entered my life and pushed me on the right track into pursuing my goals. My grades rose dramatically, and I found myself being asked to join the Running Start program. Every once in a while I'll see one of my old band-mates; they're usually starting college or working a job to build up money. When I bring up what I've accomplished and see the look on their faces, I can't help but to feel lucky that I was fazed out of band. The flute is still interesting to me. Although I don't have any plans of picking it up again, I actually thank my instrument for helping me grow the thick skin required for success.

THE NIGHT THE LOGGERS FOUGHT THE CRABBERS AT THE STRIPPER BAR

JOHN HAGERTY

I was there at Annie's
When it finally all came down
When the loggers and the crabbers
Blew up and then threw down

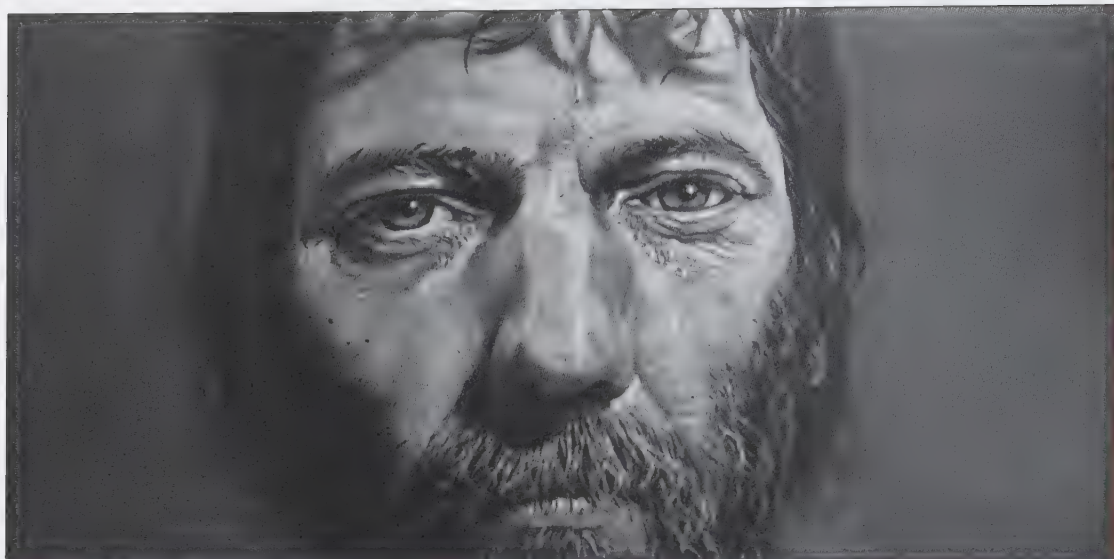
A volatile combination
Of 'pewsee', booze and pride
Made the tuffest of the tuffest
Fight the tuffest side by side

Tables toppled over
Broken jaws and broken glass
Even some hats were damaged
In the mass of kicken ass

They tumbled out to the parking lot
Where I bet they fought like hell
I never saw who won or lost
It was proolly hard to tell

See, I'm a lover not a fighter
Wisdom falls like pearls
I'll stay in here and do my best
To protect these naked girls

But those strippers would have been ok
They didn't need no tazers
They didn't need no clubs, no guns
Cuz I think they all had razors



TIMOTHY PEITSCH, *JOHN COLTER*, ACRYLIC

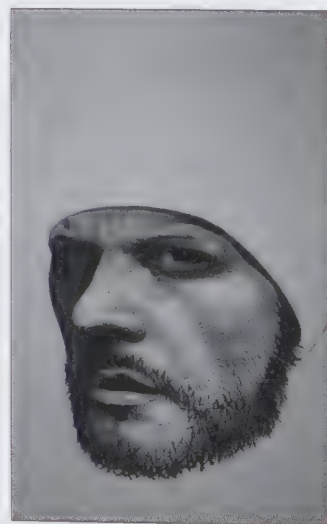
Artist Timothy Peitsch, a fifth generation Astorian who has held a long time fascination for the history of his home, brings to life the iconic individuals who helped shape the legend and lore of the oldest American settlement on the west coast. Growing up in a family that is firmly entrenched in a strong sense of place. Peitsch's art is infused and influenced by the passage of time within the area. His renderings that pay homage to a history somewhat forgotten. About this series, Peitsch states, "I'm studying landmarks of yesteryear and then recreating them visually. Through the use of portraiture (and costume) I am able to capture the timeframe of each individual. So many things around us are changing and marking time without any of us even taking note. All is evolving at an exponential rate in our society. Through this series of work, I am attempting to slow down and mark out some of the things that have shaped and changed my life and our community." The works below are colored pencil on paper.



GEORGE FLAVEL



BROTHEL 1



PILE BUCK

HIGHER GROUND

ANDREW BARKER

FICTION

The silence shakes Jared from his nap in the sand. He pulls the wool cap off his face and looks up at the blue October sky. Beside him, his dog Brutus whimpers. Jared sits up and looks out toward the ocean. The surf is missing.

"You know what this is, don't you?" Says the large brown mutt.

The white beach rolls down to the tide line, where it becomes dark and firm. Beyond that, wet sand stretches out and down as far as he can see, empty and bare. Farther than the lowest tide.

"Yeah." Jared pushes his hair into his hat and rubs his eyes. "We only have a few minutes."

One night when he was a little kid and Brutus a tiny puppy, Jared and his parents stayed up late, watching updates of the tsunami that hit Indonesia. It was on the old TV set that his mom later took with her when she and Jared moved to Gresham during the divorce. Everyone on the Oregon Coast had been obsessed with the news, glued to their televisions and computers as residents of beach towns witnessed the destruction of their counterparts on the far side of the Pacific Ocean. Grainy video footage of the tidal wave replayed over and over. Palm trees and cars and bodies lay scattered beside crumbled cinderblock buildings without roofs. The thing that amazed Jared the most was the story of people on those far shores who had strolled out on their beaches unwittingly to greet the giant flood. Delighted at the vast expanse of sand that opened up as the unseen wave pulled water from the coastline, curious beachgoers wandered out with their children. Hundreds perished because they walked toward their deaths, rather than fleeing to higher ground.

Brutus wobbles to his feet and faces Jared, tongue hanging out, panting. "You know what you have to do, don't you?" The dog's cloudy grey eyes stare into his master's clear blue ones.

Jared cannot recall when Brutus started talking to him. It was well after his mom and dad's divorce, probably around the time his mother remarried, moved to Idaho, and sent Jared back to Bay City to live with his dad. The boy and his dog would have long conversations about the kind of father Jared would be when he grew up. Brutus would help him understand his dad. Logging jobs were hard to come by, he couldn't afford to raise a kid the way he wanted to, and he needed the company of his friends down at the bar more than he needed the burden of a boy at home. Jared would practice parenting on Brutus. He set clear limits on the dog's behavior and disciplined him fairly; he comforted the dog on bad days; he never forgot a meal or the daily brushing. Recently, Brutus has been helping Jared figure out how he might escape the string of dead-end jobs he's had since high school, and how to have patience when he can't seem to meet a decent girl, and why he needs to find a new place to live and stop providing his father with weed in exchange for rent.

Jared stands and puts on his sweatshirt. The silence and the stillness of the air make the sunny autumn day seem cooler than before. Although it has been over three years since he finished high school, he remembers well the tsunami drills. "Higher ground. Out of the inundation zone," he says to Brutus.

Brutus nods and pants.

Looking north Jared eyes the half-mile-wide stretch of low dunes between Tillamook Bay and

the ocean. The strip extends for two miles and ends at the jetty where the river empties into the Pacific. One hundred years ago Bayocean Spit was the site of an ambitious seaside resort with 600 home sites, a three-story hotel, a heated pool with a wave machine, and a golf course. It was intended to be the "Atlantic City" of the Pacific. Within fifty years, winds, tides and storms erased most of the resort, with some buildings salvaged and moved to the mainland. Today, not a trace remains, and there is certainly no shelter from a tidal wave.

He turns and looks the opposite way. His car is parked two miles south on a gravel causeway next to the bay. It will be washed away long before he can reach it. Jared imagines a streaming video of Garibaldi harbor, filmed from a news helicopter, showing his rusty old Honda Civic laying upside down, dripping with seaweed, atop the remains of the pier.

He then focuses on the large forested hill behind him, back from the beach. He had hiked around it earlier, on his way to the beach. It was not much more than a collection of oversized dunes large enough to support dense scrubby woods of salal, shore pines, blackberry, and scotch broom. In high school he would go out there with friends for parties and campouts. They would make fires from driftwood and sleep under the stars, awakening in the morning to see deer passing through, or sometimes the county parks ranger yelling at them to get the hell out.

He assesses the hill. "I don't know, Brutus, the highest parts are really steep and thick with brush. It's going to be tough to get up there. And even if we did get up there in time, who's to say it wouldn't just wash away. Shit, we're screwed."

Brutus barks. "You're even more screwed if you stand here thinking about it. Get your ass up there now."

He notices that the dog's back legs are trembling. Jared realizes he should never have taken Brutus out this far. Last summer, when he worked at the marina in Brighton, Brutus hung out on the dock, laying on his side, wagging and smiling for the tourists. "What a sweet old dog you have! How old is he?" Jared never thought of Brutus as old, and was surprised daily at the questions about the dog's age. It now occurs to him that the 17-year-old dog is indeed

old. No amount of glucosamine will make it possible for him to outrun a tidal wave. Jared leans over and reaches his arms around the dog's broad rib cage to lift him up, but Brutus jerks his body free and snaps at Jared's wrist. The first time in his life that Brutus ever tried to bite someone. A little blood oozes on the back of Jared's hand.

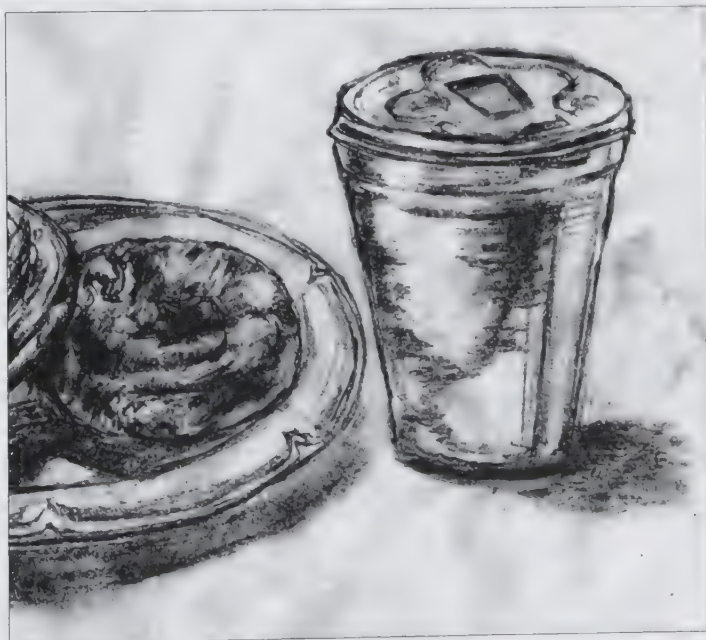
"Go!" Brutus barks. "Now!" His milky eyes are urgent and angry, ready to burst with steam and venom. "And don't look back. Now, now, now, now, now! Go, go, go, go go!"

With a wrenching jolt, far more painful than the force of a tsunami, Jared turns and runs from his barking friend. He churns his way up the slippery dunes at the edge of the beach, fueled by the force of animal fear that seizes his body, gulping for breath, and sobbing at his abandonment of Brutus on the beach. As he crosses up and over the first set of dunes, the barking dissipates. All he can hear now is the silence of the waiting sky, the pounding of his heart, and the gasps of his own grief. He plunges down the trail between small grass-covered dunes and into the forest. The brush on both sides of the trail is thick, but he lucks upon a narrow deer path that ascends uphill, and he follows it until it disappears. From there, his knuckles, arms, neck and face become streaked with blood as he climbs through thickets of salal and blackberries, grabbing and slipping on sharp branches as he heaves himself up the steep incline.

The roar of his breath and heartbeat is suddenly drowned by the thunder of the great wave. He remembers learning once that a tsunami travels at approximately 30 miles per hour, but to Jared it seems more like one of those slow motion scenes in action movies where you can see individual bullets moving explosively through the bodies of frozen characters. From his vantage point on the hillside, he turns to watch the foaming, tumbling wall of water, sand, driftwood and beach plants as it engulfs the landscape. Somewhere in that flood is a drowned dog. All this he takes in, transfixed, in the space of only a few seconds, and then he turns and clambers to the crest of what used to be a hill but now is only a small island of eroding sand in the middle of a boiling ocean. He clings to a branch of a pine tree, gazes out over the vast flood, and promises Brutus he will survive.

HOME BAKERY: A GATHERING PLACE

HOLLY ECKHARDT



COLUMN VIEWS

JAMES DOTT

I

Beaver and sea otter pelts
made millions for John Jacob.
The city took his name though he never spent a day here,
His heirs converted some of the legacy to the building and renewal
of this monument to his enterprise and the larger history.
After it was finished in 1926
it must have looked a Bunyan-sized spar tree
or an under-lit lighthouse
built too far inland to guide ships at sea
but now it is the iconic emblem of the city
a must-see for travellers
who come to climb the steps, admire the view,
arch necks to contemplate the course of empire
spiralled up its flanks in bas-relief graffito
or read the names of benefactors on the plaza beneath their feet
or on the granite plaques mounted at each landing inside,
the eye might catch the first and last of every list
but unless stopping to calm the heart and breath
you'd miss those in between: dentists, doctors, presidents
of bank and college, former mayors, good citizens,
a name, a memory for each paver, every stair.

II

At the trailhead a young eagle whistles from a spruce.
Crows begin their garroulous day calling through the trees.
Over the crest of the hill a lone raven rides the wind, holding to one spot.
Clouds cap Saddle Mountain's pommel and cantle, the skirt dark against the grey.
On Young's River a duck hunter's boat motors out
to moor at the edge of a brushy eyebrow of an island,
The cachunk, cachunk of a shotgun near Fort Clatsop,
geese flock and fly over the bay.

III

A rainbow rises from the city's west-pointing prow,
arcs east to a bulk carrier anchored on the river,
when early sun pours through a cloud gap
the rainbow brightens ten-fold,
roofs steam in the sudden warmth.

IV

I come up the trail in increasing rain,
when I reach the column top
the cupola is dark despite midday,
I open the door to a gale force roar
step onto the parapet
and am slammed to the north railing
I hug the column face, fight my way around to the door.
Back inside the only sound is the tang and clang
of my descending steps
and the clang and tang of their echos.

V

Balsa glider parts are scattered on the asphalt, lawns, and plaza.
If you are lucky, or know where to look, you can find a whole one.
Rain soaked planes do not fly but drop in tight spins and crash at the base,
dry ones make long circling flights
land on the lower hillside, the restroom roof,
Comcomly's concrete canoe, in the branches of trees.

VI

At the base the view is all fog
it thins at the top to a clear window on the river,
three freighters swing on their anchor chains
as the tide turns.

VII

A rare calm day, still early,
there are few cars on the roads,
the shore pines on the ocean fore dune are black
the sea a dark grey band beyond them

is topped by pale blue,
the faint crash and shush of waves breaking
rolls to my ears.

IX

Frost on the grass,
clear to the north, the Willapa hills crisped with snow,
to the west white breakers froth on the bar
beneath the setting moon,
Clear along the south, the coast range peaks
backlit by the rising sun.

X

Snow is glued to the door and railings
looped tracks of one truck
etch the white on the parking lot below.

XI

A squall darkens the sky at the river's mouth,
moves quickly upriver, its black veil falls
over a port-bound trawler passing Desdemona Sands
and then enshrouds the bridge.
The first drops stipple the parapet,
then hail clatters on the cupola,
I turn and go down.

XII

Clouds sweep in from the west
catch on the hill top.
First the cupola
then the ascending spiral of time,
the muffled croak of a raven,
then the base
then the parking lot and hillsides
are sponged into fog,
the steady faint drip off needle tips,
until the only thing visible
is the blank paver at my feet
still awaiting
a name.

WILD NEIGHBORS

JAMES DOTT

NONFICTION

These are not the neighbors who party until 3:00 AM or fling the f-word back and forth on their front porch proving it can be used as all parts of speech and all forms of punctuation. No, this is the other kind of wild: "living in nature without human control or care, not tame."

Every U.S. city and town has a measure of this wildness despite over three centuries of destruction. We humans converted its trees, furs, flesh, and soils to wealth and thus impoverished the world and ourselves. In some places the measure of wildness is minuscule but given our close proximity of vast tracts of forest to the east and south, the Columbia River, and the Pacific flyway we still have many wild neighbors. Their habitats and territories have a deeper history than our roads, streets, and property lines. These wild neighbors are all around us but are often overlooked and ignored; yet they can be a constant source of wonder, joy, and, yes, frustration and even anger.

As with human neighbors they can be noisy like sea lions, jays, and crows, quiet like deer and moles, demanding like hummingbirds when they buzz the kitchen window to remind you their feeder is empty, aloof like eagles gliding high overhead, aggravating like deer and slugs devouring your garden. They can trigger disgust like finding rat droppings in your basement, fear like a spider crawling on your neck. They can be rarely seen hermits like salamanders and garter snakes.

Many, like sparrows, squirrels, starlings, and sow bugs make their homes right in town. Some, like hawks and coyotes, are 'out-of-town' neighbors who make occasional forays into town to go

get 'groceries'. Others, like swallows, Canada geese and numerous ducks visit seasonally making Astoria and its environs a second (or third) home. And others, like salmon, pass by once on their way to the bigger world and then once more when they come home to die. Some of these neighbors have a long history here like banana slugs, osprey, and eagles while others, garden slugs, starlings, and red worms are, like most of us, 'naturalized citizens.'

Deer calmly walk the streets, enter yards, leaping any fence with grace. They browse in our gardens, on shrubs and trees in our yards oblivious to our aggravation. They nap comfortably on lawns unless there is a dog in the house. On occasion mountain lions are spotted at the urban boundaries and its wise to keep pets and young children inside. Coyotes have been known to take a cat or kitten. Raccoons will have their kits in holes in houses and sheds. Their cuteness factor entices some of us to feed them. But they will eat your pet foods, tangle with your pets, and slaughter your chickens. Some people are tempted to take in a young raccoon that appears abandoned, convinced by their inherent intelligence and good-natured disposition that they will make a good pet. Oregon's Department of Fish and Wildlife notes that this is invariably a mistake. As adults raccoons become aggressive. They are, after all, fierce predators who will bite the hand that feeds them.

Birds come through individually, in pairs, and flocks. Crows, jays, and flickers are here all year. From fall to spring geese pass overhead and feed in parks and fields. In winter flocks of varied

thrushes enter yards flipping leaves over with their beaks in search of insects and worms. Coots, buffleheads, and canvas backs cruise the banks of the Columbia and raft up in Young's Bay.

Given our animal-centric world-view it is easy to overlook the fact that most of our wild neighbors are plants. Hemlocks, cedars, big leaf maples, and Douglas fir have reclaimed vacant lots, unimproved right of ways. Then there are the weeds: Himalayan black berry, English ivy, Japanese knotweed whose names proclaim their alien origin. With no natural checks on their growth and spread their resistance to removal is tenacious.

We may ascribe to these wild neighbors totemic or oracular powers. They may serve as models for photographs and our own behavior. While we may take pleasure in their presence or curse their intrusions and havoc their purpose is not to benefit or frustrate us or teach us lessons. Their purpose is to survive and thrive. We may help or hinder them or be of no use at all but we should not seek or expect a human response. Our human neighbors may appreciate and reciprocate our neighborliness or get angry when we assert our own needs over theirs, our wild neighbors will not. With fences, traps, and poisons we may try to prevent our 'problem neighbors' from damaging our dreams of well-ordered cultivation. But we cannot, and should not try to, eliminate all vestiges of wildness. We should embrace and

reconnect with the greater wild life of Earth. As Thoreau proclaimed in his rambling essay *Walking*, "in Wildness is the preservation of the world."

Encounters with our wild neighbors allow us to peel back the veneer of civilization and escape our illusion of separateness. Seeing a deer stand on her hind legs and stretch for the last apple on the tree. Finding a glossy black and yellow long-toed salamander in the compost pile. Looking up an osprey flying overhead with a silver salmon struggling in its grip. Glimpsing a male hummingbird's emerald throat feathers glint with sun as it feeds on rhododendron blooms. Getting close enough to watch a swallowtail butterfly uncoil its proboscis to sip morning glory nectar. These synchronous encounters help us realize how close we really are to the essential wildness of the world. We can let them come to visit us or seek them out like Thoreau. He walked for hours every day to shake off the crust of civilization and re-enter the wild. There are plenty of paths and trails where we can do that. The River Walk while certainly not a wilderness trek nonetheless brings one close to many of our wild avian neighbors and sea lions, those quintessential party animals who are still barking and bellowing at 3AM. For a somewhat wilder excursion try the Cathedral Tree and Fort to Sea Trails or, to go even wilder, follow a game trail or bushwhack. Don't isolate yourself. Get out. Get out and get to know your neighbors.



MIKE DUNCAN AKA "MIDNITE MIKE", UNTITLED, INK

ASTORIA

RACHEL ELLIS

Home is where the heart is, or so they say.
So how did I end up so far away?

Astoria, Oregon is where I'm from.
A city so gray, a city so glum.

Steady downpours for weeks at a time
leave everything coated with mildewy slime.

Drunken bums wander the street,
begging for change or something to eat.

A walkway runs down the riverfront,
where kids go to light up a blunt.

The Columbia stretches four miles wide,
a place where many sailors died.

Sea lions wreak havoc, sinking the docks,
and depleting supplies for bagels and lox.

An old cannery sinks into the water
just down the road from my alma mater.

Where sailors were once Shanghaied from bars
hipsters now sit and play their guitars.

Astoria, what a strange little place,
filled with memories I'd never erase.

I had to get out, I was feeling held-down,
but I'll never forget my beloved hometown.

TIL THE HUCKLEBERRIES DIE OUT

AMIRAE GRIFFIN

Along the path everyone stops to pick the most til the huckleberries die out.
In a field of fallen trees, red dots stand to boast til the huckleberries die out.

A test of time, look what survived: not sturdy trees, but a shrub.
Harsh storms won't stop the growth on this coast til the huckleberries die out.

They grow wild in the woods but only if you let them survive there.
Will they live? No one can predict the diagnose til the huckleberries die out.

Fruit of such abundance, juicy and sour filled the runaway's belly
unaware of the passing time totally engrossed til the huckleberries die out.

Small rejects from an unkind world formed together as one.
Kids with knives left their names on fencepost til the huckleberries die out.

Distant memories of Indians and cowboys echo a hidden force.
Small bare feet leave imprints in mud, no host til the huckleberries die out.

I still go back to where the trees once stood, grasp the magic strains.
To see fort remnants, my childhood ghost til the huckleberries die out.

PORTRAIT OF A NEIGHBORHOOD

TRICIA GATES BROWN

NONFICTION

Dead-End, reads the yellow sign at the beginning of my road, and not until now have I pondered the misnomer. This stretch is so alive it would obliterate all inhabitants given time. We rev our weed-eaters and brandish machetes in defense of our homesteads.

"Dead" is what a city dweller might say of my rural neighborhood. But how backward, the thought. We know a different kind of life that knows no night-life.

Of late I've made a meditation of noticing my neighborhood's characteristics. It helps, when I'm walking, to keep me grounded. I live in a neighborhood midway down the stretch called Miami-Foley in Tillamook County. It is an area not unlike the Appalachians, I hear, though I've not seen the Blue Mountains. A dwarf cousin, at the least. I cannot explain how I found the place other than to say it found me.

My neighborhood—dead-end street and beyond—is a quiet mix of retired households, a few Gen-X families like mine, some second-home owners who come to set out lawn chairs in the woods or to dust off boats for fishing excursions, and then the other folks. I have not met many of the other folks, though among these are the neighbors you likely read about in the paper—our area being no stranger to crime (My husband and I wryly conclude we're safe since unstable neighbors seem only to kill their friends).

Most of the houses here do look like homesteads. Outbuildings spring up on properties like mushrooms, and plots accumulate the detritus of collecting. Many of the homeowners hold on to vehicles, or the wistful tent trailers and campers

that promise future getaways. Tools are tucked away on dusty back shelves or huddle like refugees under the eaves of sheds. It is a testament to thrift, this collecting, thick in the marrow of people who inhabit rural neighborhoods fulltime, myself included. At our place, the collections are growing, most born with art or gardening in mind: driftwood, intriguing rocks, sand dollars, plants.

Down the road is a retired couple who possess a stash of Christmas decorations ala Peacock Lane. But unlike the famous Portland neighborhood, our neighborhood sees a rather small number of souls each December. And to me, that makes the couple's display all the more pleasing. There are no hoards of city dwellers driving past to admire the house's display, just my clutch of neighbors headed home from work or chores. The lights and angels, even the blow-up Santas, seem like a gift offered just to us, to lighten winter's heaviness with festivity.

There are houses tucked down hills that are appreciated fully only on foot. One of my favorites sports gingerbread trim and a picket fence, and has a matching creek-side guesthouse mostly covered with moss. A shop with a sliding wood door and small bell tower sits alongside the French-vanilla cottage. Out front, a greenhouse. Other homes—in full view—are sorely neglected. Grass rises to hip height before a shearing.

Lacing through the neighborhood is our creek, named Foley, and it is the compass by which we orient ourselves, its singing the underscore to all other sounds. Around each

bend, it is somehow new, altered like a chameleon—the same, but not. Under summer light filtered through the lace of hemlock and maple, it becomes inconceivably charmed. It settles me here, the way the ocean settles coast dwellers. It promises I will find magic right outside my door.

On a typical walk through my neighborhood, I pass a scatter of empty lots, the broad hairy shoulders of green space that set rural neighborhoods apart from suburban counterparts. The lots belong to absentee landowners who drop in when life gives way for retreat. Ascending a shady side street one mile from my house, I stroll past such a lot. Instead of the bare circle of root-hatched earth I usually see, I witness a tent trailer and a table. On the table, a can of Pellegrino, an empty wine glass, a Mason jar holding a listing bouquet of daisies, and a jar of what, from a distance, looks like jam. The *al fresco* kitchen is probably the kitchen-away-from-home for city dwellers fortunate enough to own an ideal camp site—a lot in this quiet, bucolic neighborhood. Across the street from this site is a tree-strewn sheep pasture with thick gnarled roots rising from the ground and an arched billy-goat bridge spanning a rain ditch. Below the site, a hairpin bend of creek so clear you can count the rocks in it.

To call the site “pastoral” would not be cliché. Yet my neighborhood attracts with subtlety. It requires that you get out of your car, feel the shift of air and light, and stand still enough to see the birds disguised amid a rainforest of foliage. Some become distracted by the dog-eared mobile homes and the home sites more kitschy than cool. But there are those who come, perhaps on a whim following an ad that reads “Lot for Sale,” who get it right away.

One empty lot down the road from me stood overgrown and for sale eighteen months. It was unlucky enough to hit market a split second before the market careened off a cliff. But it eventually sold for a steal to city dwellers. They began clearing space and setting up camp right away, like that was exactly what they had in mind. Months later, the land was cleared of trees just enough to accommodate them. It had a cabin the size of a storage shed and space for a tent.

Stacks of wood from newly shaven trees dotted the fringes of the site, and camping essentials became permanent installations: fold-out chairs, makeshift tables, a cart for hauling wood, large fire pits, and metal barrels used for burning. One imagines this place as a sort of “Hooverville” in reverse. Unlike the shanty towns of the Great Depression, this permanent campsite signifies a sort of adopted, opted-for simplicity. Maybe the family hoped to build a second home on the lot eventually, creek side and hunkered against a mountain. But at first, it was their getaway. I sensed it as I passed. Until they got too busy, or broke, and never came back.

The wild edges of this place can escape our awareness, the way we’re unaware of our own trailing, omnipresent scent. We all have our cultivated plots, our settled lives. But beyond them are woods that stretch for miles, and the miles belong to others. Elk and deer, of course, but also coyotes, bobcats, even bears. I’ve not seen the bears myself, but my daughter had an encounter with one in her first six months as a driver. Driving home late one night, a bear was spotted up ahead crossing the road. She slowed as much as safety allowed—but not enough to miss the bear entirely. The front corner of her car bumped the bear’s large behind as she passed. And as you can imagine, she milks it.

If any image means summer at Foley Creek to me, it is tire tracks etched out of wildness, two tracks outlined inside and out by fuzzy ribbons of grass and weeds. The seldom travelled roads and driveways thus outlined are the epitome of country living in my mind, and of home. Maybe I heard too much John Denver growing up.

But no portrait of a neighborhood would be complete without a discussion of the neighbors. And by this I mean my immediate neighbors, those to my left and right who spot me drinking morning coffee on the porch in my bath robe.

Before I was a resident of my dead-end street, while still building my house, I became well acquainted with the patriarch and matriarch across the street. Any tool I needed was offered with matchless generosity. And if I needed help raising a ladder to reach the roof, or holding a

fixture while I screwed it into place, I could count on two extra hands. Occasionally I have something they can use and am able to reciprocate—a cup of cornmeal, a bit of computer expertise. But most often, I'm on the receiving end.

To my right is a family with two young boys, two dogs, cats, and a host of chickens, who help create the country environment. Though I rarely see these busy neighbors, I relish their chickens' chatter and the effluence of affection offered me by their dogs, who spend countless hours on my porch.

A few others reside in close proximity who keep to themselves, yet there is not a bad egg among them. I've heard of bygone days when neighborhoods were close knit and neighbors shared freely with one another, whether tools, cars, the odd teaspoon of vanilla, or the abundance of their gardens. That is certainly not the norm nowadays, but I get to experience a small taste of it. In that sense, neighborliness is alive and well on my so-called dead end street.



NANCY COOK, *UNTITLED*, PHOTOGRAPH

MEET THE NEIGHBORS

ROBERT MICHAEL PYLE

You ask about my neighbors?

Well, let's see. On Maple Street, there are the *Acers: macrophyllum, circinatum*,
and *pseudoplatanus*. And over on Oak? *Quercus robur, rubra, bicolor*, and *garryana*.

Alnus rubra and *Betula pendula* live across the way from *Populus trichocarpa*.

Up above loom *Tsuga heterophylla*, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*;

down below creep *Dicentra formosa*, *Hedera helix*, *Vancouveria hexandra*. 'Tween tree and

herb, those nice Bushes: *Corylus cornuta*, *Symphoricarpos albus*, *Oemleria cerasiformis*,

and the whole *Rubus* clan: *parviflorus, spectabile, armeniacus*, and *ursinus*. And here come

the herps: top of the morning, *Taricha*! Afternoon, *Ensatina*! Good evening, chorus frogs!

Wave to *Limenitis lorquini*. Tip your hat to *Celastrina echo*. And there go those swallowtail

boys, *rutulus, eurymedon*, and *zelicaon*, not to mention their cousin, Clodius the Parnassian,

hanging out by the bleeding hearts. We could go on forever, there are lots of folks around here.

But mustn't neglect the Douglasses, fir and squirrel; the Townsends, vole, mole, and chipmunk;

Mrs. Swainson the Thrush, Mr. Wilson the Warbler, and that vireo pair, the Huttons.

Buteo, Bubo, Corvus, and *Turdus*; *Onchorhynchus*, and *Phalacrocorax*. Who else?

Canis latrans, *Lynx rufus*, *Procyon lotor* . . . and of course, that whole *canadensis* bunch:

Lutra the otter, *Castor* the beaver, *Cervus* the elk, and bunchberry *Cornus*.

Plus a call-out to the little folks, salt of the earth: *Ariolimax columbiana*, *Arion ater*,

Limax maximus, *Prophysaon foliolatum*, *Monodenia fidelis*, *Haplotrema vancouverense*,

Vespericola columbianus—all the lovely slugs and snails of the neighborhood's damps.

Oh, I have many neighbors, all right.

Even some *people*, I'm told—

though I seldom see them, myself.

CALL OF THE WILD

JOSIE LILLY

NONFICTION

When I was a kid growing up in Seaside I never knew what to do, and if I didn't know what to do, I started walking, usually in or toward the woods. I would just keep walking until some nagging thought would eventually drag me back to the idea that I should see if my family, as dysfunctional as they were, still existed. I was eleven when I began to disappear like this, sometimes for days at a time. I went home only to shower and grab whatever scraps of food my siblings hadn't already devoured. I felt more at home in the woods than I did with my family. We moved so often that I never bothered to acquire anything beyond what would fit easily in a backpack, which never left my back, except at night when it became my pillow. That year, no surprise, we had to move again; back to my uncle's house. All of us kids refused to go, and we all found other accommodations. My siblings moved in with friends, and I moved into the woods.

In town, I knew everyone and everyone knew me. I was one of the local street rats. There were a handful of us kids who always wandered around town on our own. Some people shooed us away, but mostly the community accepted us. I made my rounds, spare changing, digging in the garbage bins for cans and bottles, and checking the machines at the arcade for quarters. If people didn't see me for a few days, people began to worry. Often they'd send one of the other kids to find me. Normally I could be easily found, reading at one of my three coffee shops, the Public Library or making my rounds. I was known to open and close the library a few days a week, that's where I'd go when I couldn't manage to drag myself to school.

By the time I was twelve I'd grown accustomed to learning what I wanted, so I never bothered returning to school. After barely attending classes for two years the administration threatened to fine my mother 5,000 dollars every day that I didn't come to class. My mother told the principal I moved to Maryland to live with my dad, and we never heard another word about my truancy, even though I walked by the school every day.

I often found myself at someone's house for dinner, and when the weather got really bad, I was usually offered a couch or a floor to sleep on. A bottomless cup of coffee was often paid for by a friendly person in the next booth over, or by one of the waitstaff. Occasionally, one of the townsfolk would slip me a twenty dollar bill, which would cover my coffee and meals for a week, even after buying cigarettes.

One summer night, a friend and I were walking around town, when some lady slammed into my friend really hard, no apology and just kept walking. My friend called her a nasty name and next thing I knew, the woman's boyfriend had backhanded my friend. We both stood there in complete shock. To our surprise, a group of locals had surrounded the couple and demanded to know why a man in his mid-twenties had hit a twelve-year-old. "No one messes with our girls," I heard a voice say. At the end of the conversation, the group walked the couple back to their car and sent them on their way. After that, I felt like the whole town had my back.

But to have support is one thing, to have a place to call home is another. Mostly, I wanted to escape the place I lived; my crazy family, the weird

little town. I was embarrassed to say I grew up in Seaside and wanted to be anywhere but there; not because it was such a bad place, but because life felt wrong. The woods and the beach were for me, what I would imagine it would be for a child returning to their room, or a safe place, away from the cares and worries of the world. Restlessness, kept me moving. I was a skittish wild animal, the kind you might throw scraps to, but had the sense not to approach for fear of one of two outcomes; either someone gets too close and the animal spooks and disappears, or the animal charges and attacks. I was prone to both reactions, depending on my perceived level of threat. I was a nomad, a socially awkward child looking for something I'd never experienced: peace, home and stability. But how do you find something you've never experienced? Where does one even begin to look? All I knew was as long as I was away from my family and I was in the woods I could be free and at peace, lost in imagination.

One day I was milling about, kicking rocks at the surfers' parking lot in Seaside; head down, shoulders slumped, hands in my pockets. The tide was out and it struck me that I could walk further around the point than usual. I decided to see how far I could make it, before I was forced to head for high ground. I walked south, gliding over the rocks like a pro. With every step, I could feel a stone or two slide out from under my feet, striking a nearby rock, and with a clink settle into place, creating a rhythmic—swoosh clink, swoosh clink—as I steadied my pace.

I was sandwiched between two massive forces: Tillamook Head on one side and the breaking waves of the ocean that swallowed everything besides the ground directly beneath my feet, on the other. This wasn't a neatly packaged box all wrapped with unnecessary objects, but a natural state of living. Feeling connected, my feet to the ground, the rocks and the water spraying me as the waves broke across the rocks. I could taste the salt fresh on my lips and smell it lingering in the air.

The rocks began to change as I passed the final row of houses. They grew bigger, jagged and not as easy to navigate. Big logs had washed ashore and

there was more debris hidden between the rocks. Remnants of buoys, kid's toys, plastic bottles, wrappers, and string poked out from between the logs and rocks. I passed a dead seagull all distended and bloated; the smell was so putrid I felt sick.

I walked for about an hour and a half collecting stones that looked like arrowheads, chalk rocks, and any other useful looking objects that caught my eye.

When I looked back, I noticed the ocean had started to swallow some of the drawings I had made on the larger stones along the way. I knew I would not be able to walk much further. As I was rounding the next corner, I looked up and was surprised to see a wooden structure approximately one hundred feet up on the side of the hill. It poked out from behind the canopy of sad, old, grizzled trees. I was convinced it was an old boat tossed asunder and thrown vehemently from the sea during one of our coastal storms, and their notorious hundred-mile-per-hour winds known for hurling logs from the beach through residential windows.

My path was still clear up ahead, but I was curious about the structure, I had to see it close up. Besides, the tide had already started to come back in. I needed to get off the beach. Not far back I saw an easy entry point, where a gully with a little stream cut down the side of the hill and emptied into the ocean. I scrambled my way up the reddish-brown mud clay hill, making slurping noises every time my foot sank into the mud. From there, I carved a path along the side of the cliff until I could feel the splintering wood of the boat-like structure beneath my fingers.

Up close I could see it was a ramshackle old cabin, beaten and broken down by the elements. It was easy to see why I had confused the oddly placed structure for a boat. The top of the cabin had two levels, higher in the back where I could imagine a steering wheel, and the front was lowered like the bow of the ship. The underbelly was covered on three sides, leaving one side with a large opening. Ah, I thought to myself; this must be the place they call Surfer's Cabin. I had heard rumors of this place for years, but no one knew anything about when or why it was built, only

that it was called Surfer's Cabin because it was said that it could be seen by the surfers who paddled out a little past the point beyond the cove. No one I'd talked to believed the place actually existed.

The whole place was strewn with trash, torn up clothes, soggy ripped sleeping bags, plastic wrappers, disintegrating paper products, rusty old tin cans and shredded, fading tarp remnants still half affixed to the open side of the underbelly of my new ship. In those days, I never went anywhere without my pack, which contained everything I owned neatly fastened and strapped to my back. At this point, I was no stranger to living or sleeping in the woods, and I was fastidious, even at age eleven. I made sure to leave no identifiable human mark on the places I visited. I always carried extra plastic grocery bags stuffed in my pack for just such occasions. I set about gathering and piling as much trash as I could in my bags. All the bigger stuff, like the sleeping bags, I shoved far to the front in the underbelly of pirate ship Lilly so I could pack them out later.

Behind the cabin were the biggest, fuzziest, moss-covered trees that beckoned me to climb them. They were not dense with foliage, but kind of scraggly. The topsoil looked very dry and eroded, it looked like more trees had fallen over than were left standing, in this damaged headland, exposed to the raw Pacific winds.

On the way out, I carved a small barely noticeable trail through the woods. I studied all the twists and turns, the patch of sour-grass. I could not help grabbing a few leaves, which I greedily shoved in my mouth leaving a sour bitter taste on my tongue. I passed large Sitka spruce, Douglas fir, and pine trees, which, at just above eye level, contained the tastiest licorice ferns. I slid down the hill, crossing over the stream with a running start, half climbing the mossy tree while gaining footing on the mud bank on the other side. I ran through the ferns, and climbed over the carcasses of some of the last of the old growth in Clatsop County. This was my first time on a trail that would soon become a daily ritual.

In the late spring when everything was in bloom, I would forage wild berries, two different varieties of blackberries: the little sweet ones and

the larger not so flavorful ones. I would pick and eat as I went: salmonberries, the little red huckleberries. The thimbleberries were by far my favorite, but they had the shortest season of all the berries. In the cold and blustery weather, the wind whipping through the trees, through the creaking and howling echoing through the forest, I huddled in the underbelly of that cabin shivering and huddled in a ball.

Walking some of the trails often reminded me of the three years I spent in West Virginia, where we lived high up in the mountains, six and a half miles from our nearest neighbor, and my great aunt Violet lived at the foot of the mountain. She was a cantankerous old coot who'd been kicked in the head by a horse. She wore an eye patch and always had at least one gun in tow. From our house our next closest neighbor was on the other side of the mountain. As kids we were all over that mountain. Once in the dead of winter with several feet of snow on the ground, my dad was awoken in the middle of the night, by a call on the CB, "Buddy, we have two of your daughters here, and they're soaked, it's no wonder, thirteen miles in this weather, you'll be lucky if they don't lose some fingers or toes."

I was six when we boarded the bus to return to the West. Within a year, my first real depression took hold. The only way I could forget was to outrun it, far into the woods, until it all subsided. Then there was a stillness, and I'd stop running, as if in that moment everything negative had been stripped away, like I had suddenly been tuned to a different frequency. I guess that's when my wanderlust was born; a restlessness that would eventually lead me to Surfer's Cabin.

For twelve years, I returned to that old cabin. I even lived there off and on for a few years. I felt I would be better to branch out on my own, and Surfer's Cabin gave me shelter, a sense of wonder and hope. It has been many years since I have been to the cabin, but I still think of it often. I do not think I realized it then, but I know now I needed the place; it gave me a chance to create a space all of my own. I have looked for that surfer's cabin many times over the years but could not find it. I wonder if my old pirate ship (on the hill) is still there, if it is, I know I will find it, and reunite with the first place that felt like home.



DIANE BEESTON, *ASTORIA GOTHIC*, ACRYLIC ON BOARD

STILL MY NEIGHBOR... IN A DIFFERENT WAY

DONNA QUINN

NONFICTION

I always thought we would grow old together. Two little old ladies walking and talking up and down the steep hills of Astoria, Oregon. Linda would wear her warm black winter coat, hood drawn tightly against her face, a monkish figure, everything matching, sturdy and determined. I would be wafting around wrapped in un-color-coordinated scarves and layers—a fine pair we would make. We would talk of our childhood, of watching clouds drift above us on summer days as we lay in the grass at our Grandparent's Valley Breeze Farm. We would talk of our special dance we choreographed in the front yard. We would lament that awful orphanage where our Easter baskets disappeared, where they wanted to separate us and send us to separate foster homes until our parents could work out custody. Since I was the older child and fierce about us staying together, they finally acquiesced. We stayed together, through it all, through her sixty-four years. We argued and fought thumbnail wars as children, the scars of which we bear on our hands today. Though we took different paths and lived astonishingly different lives, we always stayed together. We always came back together after hurts and disappointments and bad behavior on both parts. We were a team, a unit, through marriages and divorces, hers and mine, we clung to each other, touchstones for what was real—a home base for fractured and challenging existences.

The talks we would have, the laughter, the discussions of her children and mine, of men and romance and trips and God and which lipstick looked best and about old work mates and office intrigues. Then she would go home and make

eggplant parmesan or her famous chocolate chip cookies, and I would be off in my car gathering some new experience to bring back and share. We argued a lot over religion, which was sad. She was a reborn Christian, and I don't have a label which fits what I am. Still, in the end, we both realized it is always about Love, about Kindness and Compassion and Love.

Although I knew your body well, you felt heavy, dense—a new sensation. Although I held you often when we were young, when you leapt into my arms during our special dance. Although we shared a bed over many years. Although I was at the hospital when you had the tests, and the surgery, and the chemo, when you told me, this wasn't what you had planned.

This time, the last time, I could hold you. I had to let you go. Only moments in the dark to say goodbye again; to say your prayers again—the Christian ones you liked—before pouring you slowly, into the earth, under the rosebushes in a place where you were happy, here by the River in Astoria.

CROSSING THE BRIDGE TO ASTORIA AT NIGHT

KERRI BUCKLEY

The city is lit
Hillsides of silver and gold
Ships twinkle and glow
River-our brilliant mirror
Darkness blooms light everywhere!

COUNTDOWN

KERRI BUCKLEY

There are things I know for certain—
we are the canaries of our experiments,
but what is the cage?
Can the blue ball in space go on without us?

What are the colors you see
watching a forest burn?
Charred stumps, ash and soot remind us of what?
Explain this to the deer, to the gentle face of a cow.
Explain it to a child.
What do black roses mean?

It has always been a countdown
for the meltdown, the breakdown, the
inner-workings of the clock, collectively
rolling the dice to choose
responsibility and awe. Or indifference?
The hope is in your mirror.

KILLER CLAM TIDE

JAN BONO

FICTION

There's something magical about a clam dig at night. It's magical, mysterious, and with just a hint of goosepimply danger...

"Why are we whispering?" Asked Karla. She wanted to giggle, but the look on Brian's face told her this was no laughing matter. "It's not like the clams can hear us, you know."

Brian didn't answer. Using the light provided by his open truck door, he lit another match and turned the knob on the Coleman lantern. This time, there was the satisfying whoosh of ignition, and the unmistakable smell of burning kerosene.

He looked up at her and scowled. "Didn't you bring any boots?"

Karla looked down at her feet and shrugged. "These are my beach tennies. It doesn't matter if they get all sandy and wet."

"Suit yourself." He reached into the back of the pickup and pulled out a shiny aluminum clam gun and a well-worn clam shovel. He propped them both against the back bumper, then leaned back in to retrieve two homemade clam buckets made of plastic gallon bleach jugs. He unfastened his belt and slipped it through one of the bottle handles, securing the container comfortably on his hip.

The other bucket had a length of rope tied to it, and this one he handed to Karla. "Here. Tie this around your waist. You'll want both hands free to work the gun."

"Gun?" Karla's eyebrows shot up in surprise. "You mean we have to shoot them?"

Brian sighed. "That's just what it's called." He handed her the aluminum tube with the handle attached across the top. "I'll teach you how to use

it when we get down to the water's edge."

Without further comment, he closed the truck door, picked up the lantern and shovel, and strode purposefully toward the ocean. Karla could do nothing more than trot along behind.

"Brian," she said softly, once she'd caught up with him. "Look!" She took hold of his arm to stop him with one hand, and with the other, motioned up and down the miles of beach. "Look at all those lanterns glowing. Hundreds of little beacons of light. It's like a second city out here, and inside each bright spot another unique story is being told."

"Oh for God's sake, Karla." Brian wrenched his arm free and resumed his westward march. "We're late. The tide's almost full out. Let's just get out there and get our clams."

They walked the rest of the way to the surf line in silence. The night's chill was quickly forgotten as Karla learned to manipulate the clam gun.

"Catching clams is harder than I thought," she said after a time. She stuck the tube into the sand next to the last hole she'd dug, straightened up and rubbed her back with both hands. "I'm counting this as my aerobic exercise today."

Once again, Brian didn't answer. He was busy stomping the sand in an ever-widening circle.

Karla looked up and down the beach again while she waited for him to either find a clam hole, which indicated where to dig next, or work his way back toward her with their only lantern.

Lots of clam diggers had already left with their evening's bounty, and the lights were

becoming fewer and farther in between. It was interesting to her how each lantern only illuminated a tiny area of the vast expanse of sand. A few steps either away, and there was nothing but darkness.

"There." Brian pointed at a spot in the sand in front of him. "It's your turn to dig."

Karla joined him and stared down at the raised ring of sand. "It looks like a little donut." She tilted her head and looked up at him. "Or a volcano. Or maybe a washer. Funny how they pump the sand out like that and give themselves away."

Brian glowered at her and breathed a sigh of frustration. "Are you doing to dig this clam or just stand around flapping your lips all night?"

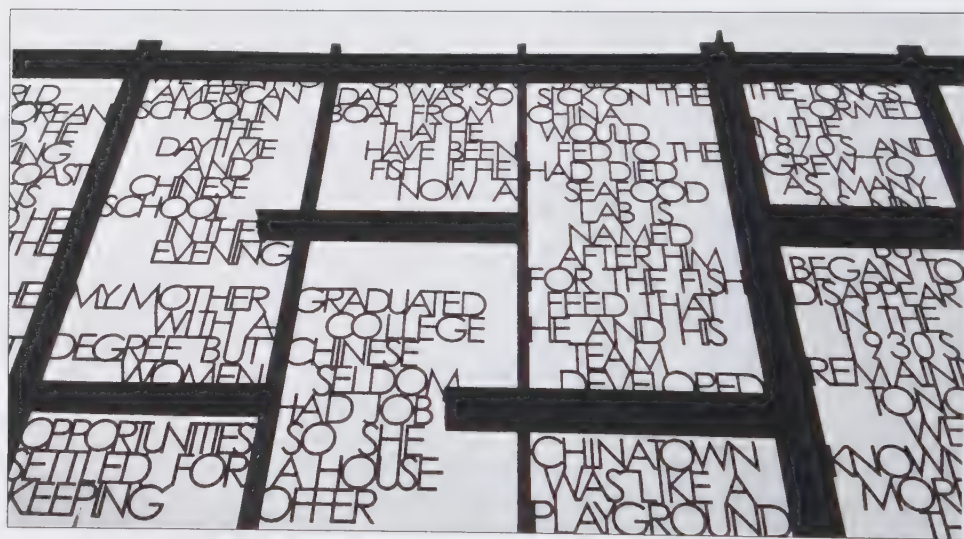
Karla considered this a moment. "Why don't you dig this one? You can show me again how digging with a shovel is far superior to using a gun."

He shrugged and set down the lantern. "Fine. Whatever. But I'm not going to dig your whole limit for you."

"No problem," Karla replied, watching as he deftly scooped out two shovelfuls of sand, then quickly went down on one knee, plunging his arm into the hole clear above his elbow.

And it was at that precise moment that Karla chose to kick over the lantern. In the sudden darkness, she swung her clam gun with all her might, smiling as she heard the resounding smack of connection and the satisfying thump of Brian's head going face down in the sand.

For good measure, she tied her clam bucket rope tightly around his neck. Then she dusted the sand off her hands, and walked quietly back up to the pickup, hoping that by morning's light the tide would turn him into nothing more than crab bait.



JOSEFINE MABRY & NANCY COOK, CHINESE GARDEN, PHOTOGRAPH

STAND SURELY

SCOTT ASHLEY

NONFICTION

Long since I pondered the coffee velvet swamp of fallen oak leaves filling the valley of the dunes. Poling my Sunfish around the waters surrounding my visqueen teepee from Grandpa Silas, fingerless from the victory of the cypress knees forced into clocks to count the seconds since their demise. Picking that Sunfish up and carrying it across the sticker filled marsh grass by the pier where my cat Honky stole hard head catfish from my hook. Biloxi Bay, full of shrimp and crab, filling my bayous with gar and alligators and skiing. The Mississippi Sound, the shallow estuary fed by the back currents of the Mighty River. Islands of the rawest elements of my soul and bones. My unavoidable destiny at which I must be comfortable among gators and mosquitoes and family. Sultry heat, salty skin no longer filthy but impenetrable from loneliness. My core is of these waters and sands: made sane by insanity, made pure by saltiness.

Twenty-eight feet of surge took down my childhood, my heritage. "Everything is gone. There is nothing left," Mom said. We called her Katrina, and she came, she blew, and she kept howling for more hours than we knew possible.

Slowly she elevated, and slowly she retreated taking the 1832 foundation and even the claw footed tub. Since 1910 this home of art enlightened and confused, inspired and repressed. Drowned in its own view, its own charm. The surge has taken the front house. It has taken the twenty-four acres of my hobbit land: the family pottery, the lives and homes of uncles and cousins. Has it melted the family?

"Stand surely" is the family motto. Is this place still home? Can I really go back? Does all this buzz of politics and environment mean that my children, too, would lose their keepsakes, their memories of the pitch of the stairs leading to the sanctity of their coming of age? Or does it matter? The relationship between the highly regarded constancy of neighborhood mingles crudely with the glamorized notion of adaptability and change. We idealize separation from the material as purity of self. We have to learn to accept the strange sprouts from the scattered potpourri seeds as they change the breath of our Mother Nature. We have to learn that change is our constancy, that she will howl again, and that we will stand surely among hurricanes and family.

PIRATE THE KID

DAVE DENSMORE

NONFICTION

Life can be mighty dangerous when you're a pirate, especially if you're a nine year old pirate. I guess that's about how old I was when I decided I was going to be cool like the men and smoke. I still remember my first cigarette. I'd pirated it from an older kid. I didn't steal it, I pirated it. He's stolen it, probably from his Mother. I must have packed that cigarette around for a week admiring my handiwork and anticipating lighting up. Of course it started getting kind of battered cause I had to be careful and hide it from Mom every time I went in the house.

Finally one day I managed to get some matches, now I was really in business. I was heading for the beach where I could be out of sight when I met up with a little buddy of mine who was a fellow pirate. He asked where I was going and I casually replied, "oh, I'm just gonna go have a smoke." Well he decided to tag along and help.

It was a beautiful sunny day and once we were on the beach and around the point out of sight from the village we didn't have a care. I did have a little difficulty lighting the damn thing cause by that time it was bent and limp. There was a little breeze and I almost burned my chin. The damn match blew out, this wasn't quite as easy as it looked. The next match I lit right close to the cigarette end. That worked and that smoke smelled mighty fine even if it did have a weird tint of burning hair to it.

Well, we strutted up and down that beach passing the cigarette back and forth, talking about all the fish we were gonna catch some day when we got boats of our own. We just had to be careful not to go past the point so someone in the

village could see us smoking that poor drooping cigarette. All too soon it was just a butt so I casually gave it a snap toward the bay just like I'd seen the older guys do. Well almost, that damn thing didn't go where it was supposed to and almost set my shirt on fire.

I didn't feel real good, so I decided I'd go home for a while. I walked in the house and was about to tell Mom I wasn't feeling good, maybe it would be worth a little sympathy and a snack. Before I could even say a thing she looked at me with a scowl and said, "have you been smoking?" How did she know?! Before I could even profess my innocence she pounced again. "What happened to your eyebrows?" Heck I couldn't see them, I didn't know, but suddenly I remembered that smell of burning hair when I was trying to get that cigarette lit.

I do know first hand the meaning of "deer in the headlights" cause I was caught. I didn't dare run because Mom was fast, I knew cause I'd tried a couple times. I didn't quite know how she did it but she could run and apply that leather strap at the same time. Besides, even if I managed to get out the door and away I'd have to come back for supper and Mom had a long, vicious memory. So we did our little dance, Mom leading with the belt and me singing solo. Seemed like we did that dance an awful lot, but I learned some very valuable lessons at the end of Mom's belt and I got better and better at not getting caught.

BUT! Mom wasn't the real danger for a young practicing pirate. There was much more exciting danger out there than that. For instance, the big kids had a clubhouse down by the creek

with all kinds of mysterious, cool things in there. They had warned us little kids to “stay the hell out of there.” Well! I had to see why, what was so important and secret. I knew that if I got caught they’d probably drown me in the creek, at the very least they’d beat the snot out of me, so I had to be careful. The door for the clubhouse faced the village so that was out of the question, but after very careful scouting, all the while keeping an eye peeled for the big kids, I found a board on the back side that was loose. I was in! Heck it wasn’t nothing but an old shed they’d cleaned out. There was a battered old table and a couple chairs and wooden boxes to set on and that was all. Well almost, there on a make shift shelf was their stash of tobacco and a couple pipes. Those guys had stolen them from somewhere so for a pirate they were free game.

My heart was in my throat as I swept that shelf clean, every sound outside sounded like a gang of big kids charging toward their clubhouse, but God it was exciting! I managed to squeeze back out through the loose board with my booty. I carefully put the board back in place in case I needed to raid again, and headed for my favorite alder patch. I had a good smoke being very careful

with the matches. I stayed away from home all the rest of the day too. My Mother’s lessons were well learned.

There were other dangers to be faced also. For instance, there was a fellow that used to come by boat to visit around the village. This wasn’t an uncommon occurrence but this one guy claimed to have a witch on board. He warned us kids to stay away from that boat or the witch would get us. Boy I had to see that! I couldn’t get any of the other kids to go so I borrowed Dad’s dory and rowed out there by myself. I stayed a good safe distance away but though I rowed completely around that anchored boat several times I couldn’t see the witch. I finally rowed up fairly close ready to row like hell the other way if she came screaming out on deck. She didn’t and I still couldn’t see her through the windows. I finally gave up, figuring maybe you could only see witches at night or something. I tried and tried but couldn’t figure out any legitimate reason to offer to Dad why I needed to go rowing around in his dory after dark. I never did get to see that witch.

Though a pirate’s life is exciting and dangerous, it’s fraught with disappointment too.



ROCHELLE FIELDS, CAPTAIN AHAH

STYMIED

DAVE DENSMORE

There's so much effort these days
To level the gender playing field,
And to woman's equality,
A wise man must yield.

(BUT)

She'd fished from Mexico to the Bering Sea,
Really toughed it up and down.
Partied hardy with all the rest
When they came into town.

She'd fished the offshore banks,
Even gave "date-line Tuna" a fling.
Owned her own boat for a while,
Seemed she'd done most everything.

She could hang and sew a net,
Weld steel, or run Oakum in a seam,
Lay varnish like a mirror,
Or plane smooth a rough old beam.

But finally her boyfriend found something
That she just couldn't do.
Though she swore that too she'd master
Before she was through.

He made it look so easy,
And she tried there at his side,
Her exertions were Herculean,
Though with frustration she almost cried.

Oh she tanked up on gallons of coffee,
And exercised for agility's sake,

She swore she'd find a way,
No matter what it'd take.

Literally bending over backwards,
Her stubborn streak shone through.
She could not accept that though he could
Here was something that she just couldn't do.

She wanted to wipe that grin off his face
Gaff him and stuff him in a pot!
Though she damn near broke her heart
He just laughed a lot.

Well her boyfriend showed her how easy,
Oh he showed her many times,
But in her frustration the things she said,
I just can't repeat in this rhyme

Cause always the same results
Though she ruined many pair of shoes.
She finally gave up in disgust, admitting,
There was something she just couldn't do

For all her fine abilities,
Her mighty efforts were to no avail,
And that's one place we're still Lords...
When **STANDING**, pissing' ore' the rail!



NANCY COOK, *UNTITLED*, PHOTOGRAPH

BEST BEACHES ON THE OREGON COAST

TIM SPROUL

10. *Hooded Sweatshirt Beach*

Hoody nation is here—
bundled up, we trundle down-beach
like astronauts on a windblown moon.
We shake amazed not at the ocean's apocalypse
but at a woman savaged with hope,
braving a bikini in hypothermic surf.

9. *Gale Force Winds Beach*

If the blasted Northwest wind didn't bone chill every summer
and fog chase them back to valley heat,
we'd be Santa Monica—all those beachy people,
all that damn good Mexican food
and exhausting physical fitness.
Give me the mouthy sea and let me hear it sing.

8. *Bonfire Extinguisher Beach*

Dad engineered a fire that could've blazed
Glacier Park to the ground.
But in this four-sided rainstorm,
my brothers and I hunched into smoke signals of cookfire surrender
as we retreated to Dairy Queen for French fries
flaring heat like delectable matchsticks.

7. *Hypothermia Beach*

They say you last 15-minutes in the water.
So we huddle behind driftwood forts for hours,
hole-up from a hunted wind, tune-in to an Arctic sent sea.
My beach girl dreams evaporated long ago like a faded tan line.
This is why when most go to the beach,
they don't actually go to the beach.

6. *Ice Cream Headache in the Surf Beach*

As a displaced California teen,
one icy wave slapped me

out of the surf and into parked cars
on the cliff watching perfect sets
through blurry windshields
while I swam with currents of Olympia beer.

5. *Sandy Hotdog Beach*

Sand in surround sound,
sand in the teeth, in crevices unmentionable,
sand in the 7 up,
sand blooming in the fireworks of memory,
sand in the sheets so many days later,
weekend sand gifted in luggage I can't wait to re-open.

4. *Gnarled and Slanted Spruce Beach*

We are cliff clinging, our faces alight
to a glint in the eye
like a boat on the horizon honing the storm
into gleaming driftwood knives.
What we collect we don't display on a shelf,
the flotsam and jetsam we keep to ourselves.

3. *30-Second Gaze Then Get Back in Your Warm Car Beach*

Hawaii smeared over here,
the Philippines ghosted there,
you and I angled into rain darts
as we profiled the goofy faces of clouds
that quickly vanished into the astonishing sky.
We ran to the unbridled brilliance of heated seats.

2. *Pink Eraser of Hope Beach*

Been here a thousand times
where time itself, unlike what everyone says, doesn't fly.
It isn't answered in the wind,
but in an unspoken atmospheric pressure.
With or without us, it stops, lurches and races ahead
to a dance party send-up of seaweed and sudden sun.

1. *Hot Day the Weatherman Can't Stop Talking About Beach*

You peeled layers, you tumbled in the sand.
Or like me you weren't there to feel it—you missed it!
You were driving to work.
But you celebrate its elusiveness
like the sun sliding away into November's endless grey.
I'm almost getting used to the cold.

PARADE

PAMELA MATTSON McDONALD

NONFICTION

For half an hour Raylene and Spruce stood waiting for the city's 200th anniversary parade to pass, reveling in the warmth and being happy it wasn't raining. School bands and politicians cars passed. Candy shot like shrapnel from a Christian School float. A ten year old with a huge squirt gun sprayed willing parade goers with water. Bagpipes lurked in the distance whining catchy Celtic music.

Spruce reached down and examined his feet, "These shoes are falling apart! Look at the split in the sole and the ragged Leather. They're losing their moral integrity!"

"Just like our Democratic legislators", sighed Raylene. "Grab some candy while you're down there."

Spruce scored four sour lemons, a sucker and two Twizzlers. He gave Raylene the pick of the candy. His mom worked two jobs, and this was the first fun outing they'd had in three weeks.

After he entered elementary school his mom had gone to Clatsop College for a two year nursing assistance degree. It had taken her three. She worked five days a week, eight hours a day, at a doctor's office. On Saturday, Sunday and Monday night she cleaned rooms at a condo timeshare on the beach in Seaside. It was a remnant of her first full time job after high school. She rode with another housekeeper who lived near by. They had no car.

At twelve years of age, Spruce knew how to cook a few dishes, clean up and do the laundry in the basement washing machines. He was growing fast, gangly, with thick black hair and blue eyes. They lived at the Elmore Apartments, seven

blocks up the hill from their parade ground spot.

A sparkly salmon walked by waving. There was a school of them, and more candy flew by.

"Do you want to go to McDonald's?" Asked Raylene, "We could watch the end of the parade as we walk along. "The sunny side of the street heated up their shoes as they passed the businesses on Commercial Street. It was slow going. They waded through thick swarms of parade watchers and occasionally stopped to look. Spruce stocked up on candy. When they got to the post office it was faster going. Fewer people and his French fry desire pepped his step.

At the counter, Raylene gave Spruce the pick of the coupon book. He chose a free Big Mac with a Big Mac Super Size Full Meal Deal. He wanted root beer to drink, with no ice, because you got more. Once they had their food Raylene asked, "Want to go to the river and eat?"

Spruce loved the river. He hopped up from the table where he'd instinctively sat while Raylene got their food. It was hard crossing the busy street. Once on the river walk Spruce started running. Raylene laughed. The smell of the water wafted around them. They climbed the stairs of the viewing platform together and sat on the benches high above the river, spreading out their food. The water sparkled as sea lions barked and snorted under the dock. Gulls complained about not being fed. The cars rolled by high on the bridge above them, crossing the river to Washington.

They weren't far from home, but it was a world away from their lives on other days. Spruce watched a fishing boat troll by. A tugboat hauling

a fuel barge floated in the distance. A few sailboats gleamed up stream. They sat in silence feeling the sun's warmth, serene with the view and activity before them. Spruce had saved some lettuce and a few fries to feed the seagulls. He tossed them skyward.

As he watched the gulls dive for the scraps his eyes rested on the far shore. He wondered what it was like over there. He'd heard there was an amusement park in Long Beach and go-karts. He'd met some kids who'd come over on the

transit center bus while hanging out in the Mall-ternative looking at used games. Could their lives be different somewhere else? He didn't know anything but Astoria.

They gathered up their meal containers to put in the trash cans at the bottom of the stairs. On the way home they stopped at the bowling alley to buy a lottery ticket. Raylene called it "the poor person's stock market". She didn't know how she was going to become a nurse unless she won something.



KALEY HARRIS, *A WANDERER'S NEIGHBORHOOD*, PHOTO COLLAGE

EARTH/WOMAN/WATER

RICHARD MACK

NONFICTION

She walks the shoreline, but her eyes look out to where the wind-driven spindrift lifts from the waves and rises in thin strands like the manes of mustangs rushing the drifts across a snow-laden high desert plateau. The image takes her back to a time spent inland with horses and sagebrush and trying to make life spring from alkali dust. Back to a place where horses and alfalfa drew moisture from the river and where meager gardens had to be hand-watered from ditches dug and siphon tubes in-and-out like the roll of waves.

Inland, the winter ice came down from the hills; ice on the river, ice on water troughs, and she remembers the warmth of the barn and the time spent graining the mares when she would lean into the thick winter coats, covering the long necks as soft as sable and as warm as summer sand. As warm as the sand she now walks.

She watches as waves break and exhaust themselves in thin, shallow runs up the beach. Broken sand dollars, seaweed and the skitter of sanderlings litter the moistened expanse and she knows, as her heart-beat falls into rhythm with the waves: this is where she belongs.

Here, where the land doesn't hold a firm grip, and the sea is not quite the sea of the deep. Here, where the land and sea become one.



JOE WOOD, BEACH, PHOTOGRAPH

SAND SPIT AT NEHALEM BAY BY HORSEBACK

RICHARD MACK

NONFICTION

Coastal shrubs tug at our stirrups like seaweed grasping at the legs of swimmers. The trail winds south by east, through grass-topped dunes toward Nehalem Bay. September dawn has a full half-hour head start on our ride, but has yet to clear away the drift and flow of ground fog. Limbs of Pacific yew appear as pale talons in the sweep of mist; sharp angles and edges are blunted, landscapes softened, images ebb and shimmer like the tailings of a dream. Reaching bayside, shorebirds, sanderlings and sandpipers race away from us in tiny herds while a solitary heron stands in the blue/black water of the estuary, speaking serenity silently.

Kayaks drift out of the ethereal veil of fog. Blue, yellow, red, startling at first, like drops of blood in clear water, and then softening, drifting back into gray across the water, the docks of Wheeler emerge, offering moorage to silver-hulled fishing boats.

Turning our horses south, the squeak of wet sand rises from beneath hooves, the sky clears. Horses wade into the waters of the bay to skirt trees fallen across the sand. Harbor seals raise whiskered heads and hump away disappearing into dark water, then along the bay, west at the stone jetty and across the dunes to the ocean.

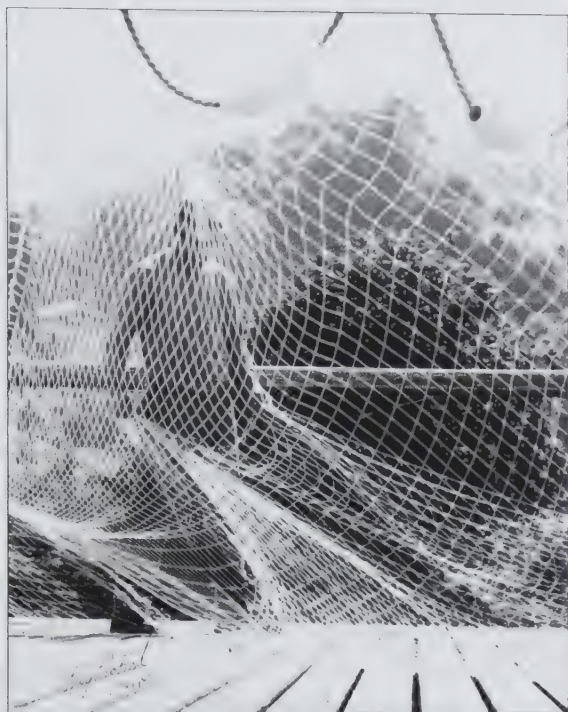
Flowering silverweed and slender spike brush offer up pale flowers in a coastal carpet along the beach. Sunlight throws diamonds into the waves and horses canter to the crash of surf.

Later, in the galleries of Cannon Beach, images from the ride reside, frozen in media. Cast-iron ravens, slick stone seals, bronze horses and serene herons trapped in watercolor, returning to camp in the wash of a pale rose sunset. Coastal elk block the roadway. Western sky reflects in the eye of the lead bull; and we feel, somehow, connected.

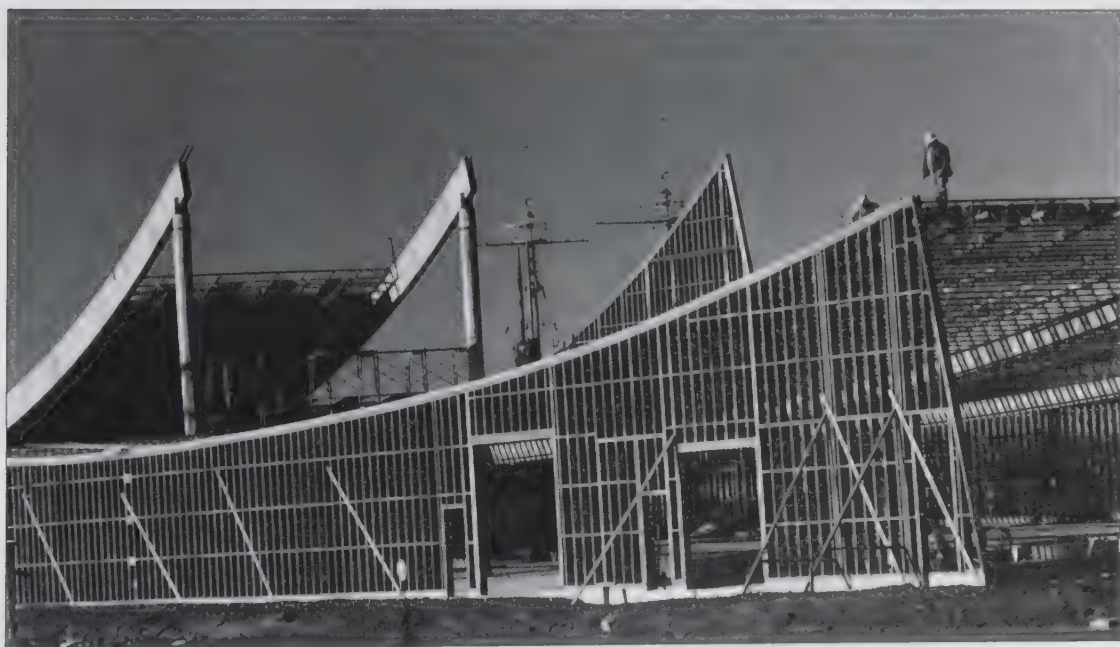
RAY PROPST PHOTOGRAPHER



Ray Propst has celebrated Astoria history for more than fifty years, documenting local people, places and events. He moved to Astoria in 1961 with his wife. Photography has never been his main source of income; rather, he uses the prizes and money earned by his pictures to fund his photography. Ray still takes photographs today using two film cameras, a Canon and a Rolleicord. He is represented by River Sea Gallery. This tribute was selected and arranged by CCC student Josi Mabry.



"NET MENDING" AT 37TH STREET, 1970s



COLUMBIA RIVER MARITIME MUSEUM CONSTRUCTION, 1970s



RAY PROPST, PHOTOGRAPH

LET'S ALL GO TO THE LOBBY

ROBIN REID

FICTION

I stared into my nonfat mocha trying to wake a tired brain. It was Saturday morning, but somehow, something was missing. My eyes drifted to the sixty-inch TV in the living room. The screen lit in grainy black and white and a man jumped into the picture wearing a bullet-shaped helmet and a leather jacket with two rocket motors on the back. Of course. I even knew the name of this episode, Chapter 3 'Bridge of Death' from *Radar Men from the Moon*. Now, old friend Commander Cody, I knew what was missing. My Saturday morning childhood fix, the Saturday Matinee. Six hours of face filling, eye popping escapades with my fellow hunter gatherer band of adventurers.

It is a little known fact that the need for the Saturday Matinee was cooked up in 1937 by Mrs. Mabel Schwartz of Shannon Avenue, Perth Amboy, New Jersey. The mother of an eight-year-old, normal American boy, she needed a rest and one Saturday morning pressed two dimes into his hot little hand and told him to go to the movies. Being an obedient and energetic kid, he did what he was told and found himself in a crowd of other boys all sent by *their* mothers to the movies. The notion spread like a prairie fire in a wheat field and soon coast-to-coast boys were packed off to the movies. And moms throughout the nation put their collective feet up on their coffee tables, opened the latest edition of *Modern Romance*, and let out a collective sigh.

I, like that unnamed kid, didn't care *why* I was sent to the movies. I only cared that I had two quarters clutched in my hot little hand and the pleasures of popcorn, candy and the movies

awaiting me.

Upon arrival, I stepped up and pushed my body-heated quarter through the semicircle ticket taker's window. She slid the quarter with one finger tip into her tray like a hockey puck into the goal and pressed a button, "Ker-chunk," and a blue, numbered movie ticket sprung from the chrome surface. She tore it off and slid it out the window, still using only a finger tip. Her movements were economical and bored, but I was excited enough for both of us.

The teenage usher, resplendent in a deep red coat, which matched the acne on his cheeks, and brass gold colored epaulets, took my ticket, tore it in half and dropped it into the collector, unlatching the red velvet rope. He also was well practiced in his actions and world-weary.

I stood for a moment, taking in the palatial carmine and gold lobby, with its refreshment bar off in the distance, sparkling and flashing. I had a pang of regret over having eaten my last chocolate cigar, as this would be a perfect moment to have a chocolate stogie clenched firmly in the corner of my mouth as I strolled into the pristine lobby. Or maybe better yet, a licorice pipe to give myself a more studious air. With a shove, the usher broke my train of thought and I stumbled toward the refreshment bar.

Even having seen it a thousand times before, I couldn't help but be mesmerized by the sheer splendor of the Chinese and Deco styled concession stand. To the right, glass fronted cases filled to the brim with golden hued popcorn. On the counter above, a line of increasing sized, white and red popcorn containers. Behind the counter,

the popper, shaped like a chrome flying saucer, had a cascade of freshly popped popcorn spilling from it. The sharp, earthy, unmistakable odor of popped kernels, radiated out. To the left, a pyramid of waxed paper soft-drink containers. Below, in glass fronted cases, rows of brightly colored packages of candy. Milk Duds, Good and Plenty, sacks of Sugar Babies, Atomic Fire Balls, Red Hots, and your ordinary candy bars, like Hershey's or Clark bars—a cornucopia of candy my years of sampling had narrowed down to a few well-considered selections.

But first, the popcorn. I stepped up to the counter and pointed to the biggest bucket available, and in a squeaky, excited voice requested, 'Extra butter.' Not partially hydrogenated, long molecule petrol-based butter substitute, but *real* butter. The girl in the black horn-rimmed glasses must have liked me because she gave an extra pump on the butter dispenser. I passed my quarter up to the counter and reached up to the galvanized metal salt shaker with a cord tied through the handle. As if someone would walk away with a coffee can sized salt shaker. A couple of large shakes and the popcorn was ready.

Now to select the drink. My eyes drifted to the second from the largest drink container, merely as large as my head. I nodded at it and after studied contemplation selected, the orange NEHI, not as sharp and caffeine laden as your Coca Cola, but more than surpassing it in sheer sugar content and bubbiness. An important attribute, as we shall see.

Which candy was a foregone conclusion: Milk Duds, a theater box-sized container, and with my last five cents, a sack of Atomic Fire Balls. I had long ago worked out a system for juggling all these items. The Milk Duds went into the pocket of my button downed, long sleeve shirt. The sack of Atomic Fire Balls into my corduroy pants

Eagerly clutching my popcorn and drink, I made my way to the exact perfect seat in the theater—center left, three seats in. The plush red seat cradled my bottom like the old friend it was. I set the tub of popcorn securely between my legs, shifted my drink to the left arm of the seat,

and teased out the first kernel of popped corn, drenched in butter, studded with grains of salt.

Just in time, as the theater was filling up. The velvet stage curtains were opening, with previews of coming attractions already playing on the opening, gauzy inner curtains. I paid little or no attention to the previews of the movies running tonight. My band of adventurers would, however, whoop and holler when the kissing scenes came in the previews. These were but a rehearsal for the cheers, gasps and shouts that were to follow when the real movies started up.

At last, the show started with the Twentieth Century Fox Movietone News. Mild interest in racing car crashes, no interest in film of Nicky Hilton's marriage to movie star, Elizabeth Taylor, fascination with the pictures of the Iowa State Fair's winner of the largest pumpkin, one thousand and five pounds of malformed gourd, with Mr. and Mrs. Ollie Davidson standing beside it pointing. Pictures of the prize winning porker had me squirming in my seat. When were the real features going to start?

With a loud cheer, Chapter 8, 'Suicidal Sacrifice' *Flying Disk Men From Mars* started. And we all waited to see how Kent Fowler would pilot his plane to escape last week's dilemma, 'Descending Doom.'

Collectively, we groaned as his plane flew to safety *behind* the vat of molten rock not into it as it seemed last week. Nevertheless, Kent shortly got into a fight with the Disk Men and all eyes were fixed on the screen. Thirteen minutes later and Fowler was once again in peril.

At least, we'd be spared the suspense of waiting until the next week, because Chapter 9 would be shown this morning, two chapters per matinee. The screen flickered and the audience screamed in anger, it was Chapter 6, 'Perilous Mission'—we were going backwards! Popcorn pelted the screen, all except from me and a few other cooler heads who knew not to waste perfectly good buttered popcorn.

Next up, the cartoon. Oh no. A Silly Symphonies cartoon. The lamest of the lame. Feet began to stamp in disapproval and it didn't settle down until the scheduled movie was to start.

There was momentary darkness. Into the darkness, the moment we'd all been waiting for, a tentative but satisfying, 'burp', followed by a rival but not as tentative, 'burrp.' Since I was neither big enough or strong enough to compete in other venues, I selected my soft drink with this in mind. My burrrrp, latest for long seconds and was greeted with mild applause. Soon the darkened theater sounded like midnight at Sower's pond outside of town, as one bull frog after another sought dominance. Finally, a loud, persistent 'buuurrrrrp!' Settled the contest to much cheering and foot stomps.

Let the show begin. And it looked to be a good one, *Stage to Mesa City*, with Marshall Lash LaRue and his side kick played by Al 'Fuzzy' St. John. Loud music, even louder gun shots, even cooler 18-foot long bullwhip. Popcorn half gone. Drink more than half gone. Bladder full up.

Squirming, I wondered if I could last past the first reel. Nope. Tuck the half-eaten container of popcorn into the partially closed seat. "Sorry." "Pardon me." "Oops." And out to the empty lobby. Into the men's room, lit to make anyone's skin look leprous. Standing in front of the great white porcelain towers with water cascading down. Staring around at the machines on the walls. I got the dispenser for combs, safety pins, aspirin, and the machine which would spit Old Spice on your face for a nickel. But what was a French Tickler? I assumed it was something that would make you laugh, but for a dime, I'd rather have a couple of candy bars.

"Sorry." "Excuse me." "Watch out for the drink." Back in the seat having missed nothing important. Lash was whipping a gun out of a bad guy's hand, to rabid applause from the audience. Too soon, Lash was kissing the girl, having solved the mystery of who was attacking the mail coaches from Mesa City. Strains of 'Let's All Go to the Lobby' led to a mass exodus to the concession stand.

Three deep, I stared over the shoulder of a littler kid than me at the candy. I'd used up my

quarter, and hadn't yet opened the sack of Atomic Fire Balls, but I needed something sweet. I had a emergency dime my mom had wrapped in paper with our phone number on one side and address on the other. I knew our phone number by heart and our address. I reasoned that made the paper and hence the dime redundant. I whistled back to my seat munching on a Clark bar.

As the second feature started, *Tarzan's Great Adventure*, I dropped the now empty popcorn container on the floor. It gave a sad, hollow sound. I had retained some of my drink, which was good since I was about to break out the Atomic Fire Balls. Rumor had it that a kid in third grade had foolishly put two Atomic Fire Balls in each cheek. They'd had to call the firemen when his cheeks burst into flame. I knew it wasn't true, but didn't have the guts to test it. As Tarzan swung Cheetah up to the next limb above him, I sucked my way down to the first white layer. Without looking, I knew my tongue was now not only burning but incandescent red. And it would stay that way until the ball had pasted through the many layers of iridescent colors. One thing, NEHI does not cool your tongue, it gives the illusion of coolness, but only time will ease the pain.

The lights came up on a sea of empty tubs of popcorn, colorful wrappers, crushed soda cups, slowly shuffling kids, many with green, weary faces. The six hours of serials, cartoons, news, films had too soon come to an end. I joined the throng of blinking eyed kids as we streamed out to the sunlit street.

My shirt tail was pulled out of my pants, one of my high tops shoe laces trailed behind me, my stomach looked like a beach ball stuffed under my Roy Rodgers belted corduroys. I was so full. I glanced at my wrist. Mickie's little hand was pointed toward three and his other hand at nine. I wonder if mom is going to serve left over meatloaf sandwiches on Wonder bread or since it's a bit chilly, maybe toasted cheese and Campbell's tomato soup for Saturday dinner? My pace quickened.

A BODY OUT THERE SOMEWHERE

JOHN HAGERTY

FICTION

Cold night. I lay on the floor, snug in a sleeping bag, at my sister's vacation house at the beach, with its perfect view of the Grays Harbor Bar. I have enjoyed watching the huge waves roll on all day. White caps appeared in groups-random, no pattern I can tell, here and there, out of nowhere. Tendril spokes of golden sunset gave way to vast oranges and pinks. I watched a sad uplifting movie in the glow of the screen and the rise of the perfect half-moon. There is no wood for the fire, but I have spent enough time sleeping cold outdoors, to appreciate being inside, out of the wind and under a roof, as my eyelids give way.

After a while I notice the sound of the Coast Guard helicopter has been passing continuously for quite some time. I saw it pass a few times before it got dark. I grew up between a Coast Guard air station and another bar. I know they make lazy passes along the beach in the morning and again in the evening. I know the pitch of the rotor when they go for a ride. I also know how sharp and direct it sounds when they are in an urgent hurry. The cost of running those machines is measured in thousands of dollars per minute. They make those AM/PM passes routine, but they don't just fly around for hours like this unless lives are in the balance.

I am warm in my sleeping bag, but the room is cold. There are large curtain-less windows all around. It gives me a stunning view of the bar, the sea, the sky and the dramatic sunsets they produce. But it will not hold the heat.

But it appears likely, somewhere in that water is a man dominated by cold. Fighting that cold. Loosing. Wanting so much to survive.

Realizing all those hopes and dreams and sorrows and joys, that are little different from my own, are now slipping away by degrees. If he is not already dead, he expects to be soon enough.

He saw how beautiful that sunset was. He has heard that helicopter all these hours. Has lived in fate and missed passes. Willed it to bank and turn to his life and death need- and failed. Perhaps he called on God to save him: With life at first; with death as the pain of numbness became all; then in the afterlife he knew was so near at hand.

Maybe there was never the time. These seafarers round here know the score and don't come off a boat if they can fight to stay aboard. It has been my experience, they fight well and hard. I've seen how they fight, when only pride and torn clothes are at stake. I've seen how hard they loose fights on land with no consciousness left. I can only imagine how hard they would fight to stay alive, to stay on board. Torn from a boat would only result from crushing trauma. Torn hard. They may have never heard this chopper, or felt the cold or tasted the deadly salt water. Never even known what happened to them.

The Bible says the sea shall give up it's dead. At the great reckoning, when what is due is paid. Then shall this sea pay what it owes. But for now it has its way with gamblers out to make a buck. Who provide for family members that never have a clue what it is like out there. How many times they come so close. How proud loved ones would be to know how strong the arms and hearts have been to get back home.

Likely, a brave and noble man bobs out

there face down . Gone. Maybe the family will get a body to bury. Maybe it gets washed away and joins many good friends. Maybe right now he is crawling exhausted up onto sand that never felt so dry and firm before. Truth is . . . not likely though. That helicopter has gone home now. It's all dark and even colder.

Earlier today, as I watched big waves lotto up into white caps here and there, I only half noticed a boat coming in across the bar because of the way it's profile tipped into a bright set of white. The way it's momentum stopped abruptly, like I'd never seen before. I mumbled a prayer and strained to see. In the time it took to look close, it righted itself. It regained momentum and proceeded on. Another boat appeared. It came on unimpeded right behind. I felt less anxious for the safety in numbers; even only two. Once inside the bar they stopped for several minutes; so near each other, they blurred into one. And then went on.

Maybe that led to the helicopter's dirge. Maybe not. Maybe the Coast Guard thought they would not get the money next year if they did not spend it this year. Maybe all these mariners sleep at home tonight. Warm in their beds. Holding safe to their wives. Proud of their children. A hell of a story to tell. Anyone who crossed that bar today has a hell of a story to tell. If it wasn't just another day at work for them. Maybe they hold their words back, out of respect for the hell of a story one of them will never get to tell. Maybe they feel, more then ever since the last time, how warm their bed is. Maybe they hold their wives closer; more precious. Maybe they are even more proud of children, who will never need a millionaire to provide them with a worthy hero. Maybe they hope in vain, their legacy will be an indoor college job for those children. Children who know the meaning of the pitch and tone

of a helicopter at ease and a helicopter in haste.

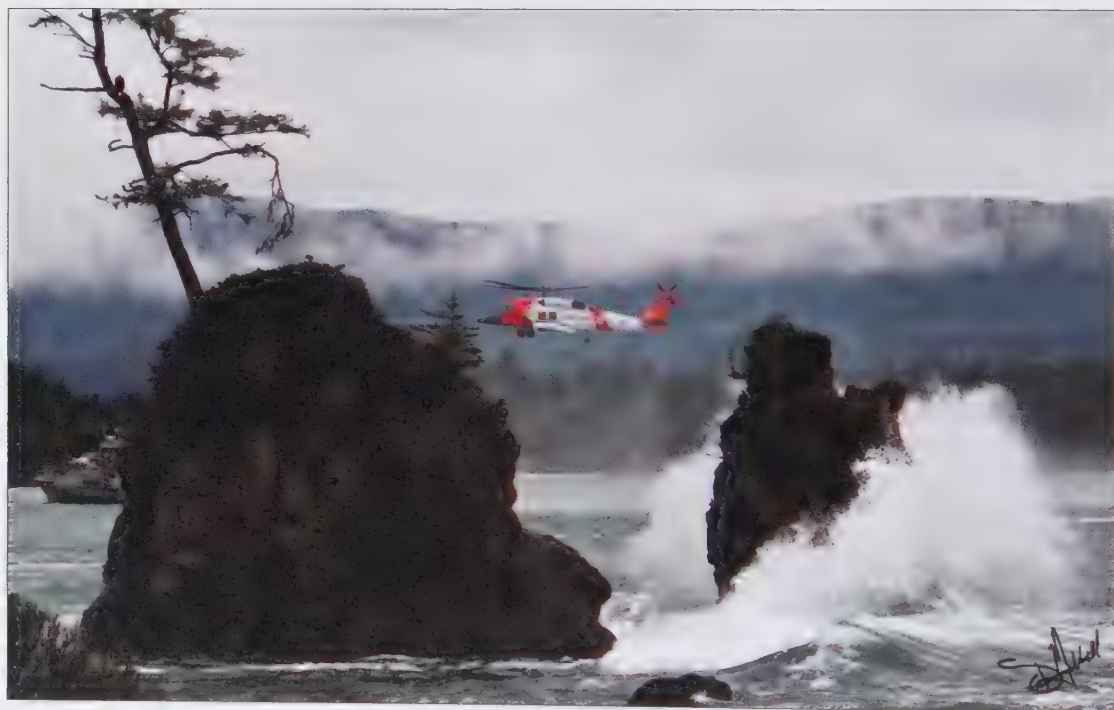
Maybe he got to see that sunset, tonight. Gawd! It was something. It made me love life a little more. If he saw the same sun setting that I saw, he saw it in a way I hope I never will. Knowing he would follow it into that same vanishing point. It'll come around again for me. If he got to see it, he had to know it never would for him. Maybe they brought him home. Maybe. Sure...

Now in the dark, I see running lights of another boat going out. I cannot see what they waves are like. But I see those lights, shiver and sway and I know it ain't no picnic out there. At first I think it might be disrespectful. Business as usual over so fresh a grave. But that thought passes quick. And I see that there could be no better tribute to the spirit of the dead; no greater memorial, no more profound statement, no more powerful commitment to life; to that kind of life—than for more brave souls to hack their way through the storm, beat back the fear; show there will be no compromise made, no quarter given, no defeat accepted. To carry on. To continue on.

I am glad to be warm and dry. I appreciate it now, more than ever. But that is no tribute to harsh truth. There is no closure, no redemption, no balance in warmth and safety. The guilt of living is not washed clean by a blanket. If we meet in the great beyond, they will not tell me they were given comfort to look down on me in my sleeping bag. They will disdain these scribbles as the poor record of a tale I will never know. They will more likely say they were comforted and resolved by that boat and men they likely knew; plodding out into the horizon. Following that example gave then the peace and direction they needed to go home- truly home, over that final bar we all will cross someday.



U.S. COAST GUARD, *FORMATION FLIGHT OVER ASTORIA*, PHOTOGRAPH



U.S. COAST GUARD, *WAVE DURING CG PRACTICE*, PHOTOGRAPH

KIMBERLY ADAMS is a Louisiana native now living in Astoria. During her education at the University of New Orleans, she was recognized with the Trish Hollis “Designer of the Year” award while taking print-making and illustration classes. She finished her BA in Fine Arts in 2006 with a minor in darkroom photography and journeyed to the Northwest for adventure in the beautiful outdoors with new friends yet to be found.

VICKI BAKER is a local artist who is a printmaker and acrylic painter. Her work is shown at RiverSea and Tempo Galleries in Astoria, and Trails End Gallery in Gearhart.

ANDY BARKER has had writing published in *The North Coast Squid* and other magazines and journals. He and his partner have been “commuting” from Seattle to their vacation home in Manzanita since 1999. A high school English teacher for 30 years, Andy advises his school’s literary magazine and teaches creative writing.

JAMES BARNES was born in 1965 and lived in Southern California all but the last 3 years. James has a wife, Vicki, and an adorable 4 year old named Skylar. He has been interested in artistic endeavors his entire life and more than anything else, he enjoys creating. His artworks are all created in 3ds Max and Photoshop.

DIANE BEESTON is a well-known maritimer photographer who left an art career in San Francisco to live in Astoria. She has been painting with passion since 1998. *Astoria Gothic* (named by the editors, not the artists) was the luckiest garage sale score ever. Hopefully Diane approves that we printed it.

JAN BONO’s specialty is humorous personal experience, with several collections published, as well as two poetry chapbooks, nine one-act plays, and a dinner theater play. She’s written for magazines ranging from *Guidepost* to *Star* to *Woman’s World* and to date has had 22 stories in the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series. Jan is currently writing book three of a cozy mystery series set on the southwest Washington coast.

TRICIA GATES BROWN is a writer and garden designer who resides on the north Oregon coast. She is author of several books including *Jesus Loves Women: A Memoir of Body and Spirit*.

KERRI BUCKLEY was born in Kansas City, and has lived in Philadelphia, Virginia, New Orleans, Oklahoma, and Washington State. She studied art, history of art and English at the University of Kansas, and culinary arts in Kansas City. She currently lives in Oregon.

JOHN D. CIMINELLO has appeared in various publications including *THE SUN*, *Mentor*, *Salal*, *Squid Ink* and *RAIN*. He is the author of *Shrine Above High Tide* (2009). His wish list includes a trip to the Alhambra in Cordova, Spain, an audience with Pope Francis I, and an end to world hunger (not necessarily in that order).

VICKI CLARK is a 38-year-old mother of 2 boys. She is a student at CCC, aspiring to be a children’s author.

JAYMES CONDON is a graduating student of Clatsop Community College in Astoria, OR and a former Job Corps student, now attending classes at WSU Vancouver in pursuit of a career in the field of editing. He is an amateur writer, poet, composer, and game-maker with an interest in all forms of art whose goals include to one day be published in a variety of mediums.

LYNN CONNOR grew up in flat land. She saw her first mountain when she was six and said she would live by the mountains someday. Someday was more than fifty years later when she and her husband moved to Oregon.

NIZINA “IZI” COOK is a six year old student at Astor Elementary. She is named after a river and road in the Wrangell Mountains of Alaska, where she spends each summer. Her passions include dancing, painting, singing, cooking food, and hanging out at the CCC Mac lab, doing whatever she can to stay out of her mother’s hair.

ANNA R. DAVIS is fifteen years old, loves to read and write poetry, and plans to make writing her profession. She was born and has lived in Oregon all her life.

FRED DENNER is a trapper, logbuilder, all-around craftsman, part-time goldminer, and revered subsistence guru who also takes beautiful photographs which, thanks to the miracle of communication technology, can now be found on Facebook and elsewhere. He lives on the far-side of the Nizina River in the Wrangell-St. Elias Mountains of Alaska.

DAVID DENSMORE has been fishing for over fifty years after growing up in Kodiak and Alaska’s Aleutian Islands. Trolling, crabbing, seining, trawling, he has fished in every way. “Dangerous Dave” has also kept his pen moving for nearly twenty-five years. He’s published two books, a CD, and performs his poems at the annual Astoria Fisher Poets Gathering and numerous other venues nationwide.

JAMES (JIM) DOTT has lived in Astoria near the Goonies house (a pilgrimage site for many born in the late 20th Cen-

ture). Jim is an elementary educator, backyard chicken farmer, and community radio programmer. He has been a contributor to *RAIN* since the 1990s.

WAYNE DOWNING is a retired bookseller (and before that—for twenty-five years—was a typesetter). He lives in Ocean Park with his wife. He is currently a programmer for KMUN Radio (“In The Mood,” every Tuesday, 1-4 p.m.) and also writes a monthly column “An Old Dog’s Tale” for *The Chinook Observer*.

BRIAN DOYLE is a dad, a dad, a dad, a husband, a son, a brother, a friend, a citizen, an editor, and a writer, in that order. He edits *Portland Magazine* at the University of Portland. Doyle has been published in *Rain* many times, and is the author of *Mink River*, a sprawling Oregon Coast Novel.

BRUCE M. DUSTIN taught English and Spanish in the Warrenton School District for twenty-one years and is retired.

RACHEL ELLIS grew up in Astoria, but is currently going to school in Gainesville, Georgia. She’s always enjoyed rhymes. Her poem Astoria came to her one day while she was thinking about home.

ANNIE FLETCHER creates art because she is moved to do so. She tries to surround herself with artistic creative people in the hopes that their sparks will embed into her being and sprout something beautiful. She is an elementary school teacher, yoga instructor, radio programmer, and trapeze artist wanna-be.

CALANDRA FREDERICK is a middle school English teacher for ten months out of the year. She spends the other two months writing the various stories trapped inside her head. She’s previously had two fictional short stories published in *RAIN Magazine*.

STIRLING GORSUCH is a Clatsop Community College graduate and current Oregon State University fine art student.

GORDON A. GRAVES has become upset with the “Global Warming” cabal and their attack on his favorite gas, Carbon Dioxide. Carbon Dioxide can put out fires, make beer cold, and is the breath of life to all green plants. It is so nice it couldn’t be responsible for “Global Warming.” Gordon believes politicians are causing the hot air problem, and that the French did the right thing in 1789.

JOAN GRAVES is a neighbor to a heron rookery at Jackson Bottom Wetlands in Hillsboro, Oregon.

JOHN HAGERTY was raised in Warrenton Oregon. He’s a Razor’s Edge drifter, poet, playwright, stand-up comedian, beach bum, and a proud pentagenarian.

PATTY HARDIN recently published a picture book that her niece illustrated. A shark fanatic, Patty is forever on the lookout for shark-related items.

KAREN R. HESSEN has been published in *RAIN Magazine* 2013, Guideposts, five volumes of *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, *When God Makes Lemonade*, *Seeds of...*, *Apple Hill Cider Press*, *Vista* (9 times), *The Mothers Heart Magazine*, *God Makes Lemonade*, *The Secret Place* and others. She writes the monthly column “Out of the Ark” for the *Seaside Signal*.

KATHIE HIGHTOWER is a writer, author and speaker. She has co-authored four books for the military spouse world, along with columns and features in publications worldwide. She is co-founder of the Manzanita Writers’ Series.

CLAUDE HITE was born in Atlanta, moved to Florida during high school, graduated from University of Southern Florida, and camped in Washington and Oregon for twenty years before retiring to Dow Mountain by the Olympics. He spends his days camping, traveling, canoeing, reading, and listening to lots of Grateful Dead music.

JANICE HOPE HORNING lives in Olney, on Youngs River Road between Astoria and Jewell. She currently works for Columbia Memorial Hospital, and has ‘a dashing dachshund and two Big Dogs’. She also has two grown sons, who deployed to Afghanistan at the same time to teach her patience. She attended Clatsop Community College thanks to the Art Fertig Memorial Scholarship and received the student body president’s award during her last year there. She moved to Portland to get an anthropology degree.

TAMMY L. LAMBERT says “Life is not about finding yourself—it’s about creating yourself.”

JOSIE LILLY grew up on the Oregon Coast. She’s currently a student who lives and works in Astoria, Oregon. She likes to hike, farm, fire dance, learns new things and spend time with her family.

MATT LOVE lives in Astoria and is a lifelong educator and publisher of Nestucca Spit Press. He’s the author/editor of eleven books about Oregon. In 2009, Love won the Oregon Literary Arts’ Stewart H. Holbrook Literary Legacy Award for his contributions to Oregon history and literature. His latest book is *Rose City Heist: A True Crime Portland Tale of Sex, Gravy, Jewelry and Almost Rock and Roll*. His website is www.nestuccaspitpress.com.

RICHARD MACK's prose and poetry have been published in journals such as *Red Cedar Review*, *Wind Literary Review*, *South Dakota Review*, *Salal Review*, *Canary Environmental Journal*, *Cirque* and others. Mack lives on Mt. Emily near La Grande. **PHYLLIS MANNAN** lives in Manzanita, Oregon. She has had poems in *The Oregonian*, *The NorthCoast Squid*, *RAIN*, *StringTown* and other Northwest publications. Her nonfiction stories have appeared in the *Cup of Comfort* series, *The North Coast Squid*, and *RAIN*.

MARIAH MANNERS lives in Astoria and works at CCC. She enjoys *Star Trek: Next Generation*, sushi, and walks with her dog Barnaby. She spent some time working on these pieces while lounging on the beach at Trestle Bay last summer.

PAMELA MATTSON McDONALD has been writing a mystery for the last year entitled *Kilned Again: A Jennifer Harrington Jones Mystery*, which will be coming out in another month as an ebook. She is also the author of *Slingin' Hash and Hau-lin' Oil* which is being considered by Agent Jessica Papin for Penguin.

AVE MIDDLEFIELD spent her/his youth in the fertile San Joaquin Valley, California among the orchards and fields of a farming community. A simple lifestyle of earth and water are reflected in his/her writing which focuses on relationships of family, solitude and the internal strength of many of the characters.

ROYAL NEBEKER is a printmaker and painter from Gearhart, Oregon with a studio in Astoria's Red Building. His studied art first at Brigham Young University and later in Oslo, Norway and Japan. He resume includes numerous national and international exhibits, including, most recently, "Recollections & Dreamscapes" at Lisa Harris Gallery in Seattle. He is also represented by Augen Gallery in Portland, Oregon.

LANCE NIZAMI has no formal training in the Arts. He started writing poetry during a long airplane flight in 2010, and has written much since then in-flight. As of 10 December 2013, he had 102 poems in print or in press, the most recent acceptances being at *The Helix*, *The Cannon's Mouth*, and *Tribeca Poetry Review*.

KRYSTAL NORBERG has been writing since she can remember. She has experience in journalism both as a writer and editor. She dreams of being a writer, while studying anthropology and geology at Oregon State. She currently lives in Tillamook so she can be close to her family and long-time boyfriend Dylan, whom the Untitled poem is dedicated to.

REBA OWEN is a northwest artist and poet. She is also the second oldest woman boogie boarder on the north coast. Her themes usually fuse human behavior and the natural world. She is a graduate of Oregon State University.

TIM PEITSCH's recent drawings are an attempt to mark the passage of time in his own life. A fifth generation Astorian, he has worked in marine construction alongside his father for many years. As a pile buck, he has participated in maintaining the historical structures and docks that line the banks of the lower Columbia.

ROBERT MICHAEL PYLE is an essayist, poet, fiction writer, and biologist who dwells about two miles above tidewater along Gray's River in Wahkiakum County. Of his eighteen books, the latest is *Evolution of the Genus Iris: Poems*. His publishers include Lost Horse Press Knopf, Scribner, Houghton Mifflin, Penguin, Beacon, Milkweed, as well as Yale and Oregon State University presses. A novel, another book of poems, and a volume of collected essays are forthcoming.

DONNA QUINN is a sagebrush-sun-loving lizard who found a different kind of magic in Astoria. Donna appreciates the quirky nature and original character of this unique community. She produces and hosts *Talk of Our Towns* on KMUN and is working on a book, while her myriad clones are doing other interesting things in Amazing Astoria.

ROBIN REID has spent the last seventeen years renovating a ninety year-old house in Garibaldi.

RICHARD ROWLAND is a much-loved ceramics instructor at CCC. He dedicates his life to creating art and cultivating community at the Astoria Dragon Kiln and volunteers hundreds of hours each year to the Tillamook and Astoria Soup Bowl Projects. A recipient of the OR Governor's Arts Award, he has studied ceramics in Tasmania and New Zealand.

CARMELO (CARLOS) SABIDURIA is an engineering student at Portland State University, and a graduate of Clatsop Community College. His true passion is writing, which he spends most of his time doing. He likes experimenting with prose forms and writing pieces that are unsettling to readers.

KRISTIN SHAUCK is a figurative painter who teaches drawing, design, and painting at Clatsop Community College. She is the founding director of *Au Naturelle: The Nude in the 21st Century International Juried Exhibition*. Her colleagues often comment on her uncanny resemblance to Frida Kahlo.

FLORENCE SAGE was the founding co-host of Monday Mike for spoken word at the River Theater, founding poetry editor for *Hipfish Monthly*, co-producer of Read at the River poetry CD, 15-year co-producer of the annual Fisher Poets

Gathering, all in Astoria Oregon. Earlier a newspaper feature writer and editor, she is now retired from the social sciences faculty at Clatsop Community College. Her poems have appeared in several regional literary magazines.

BILL SHIVELY is a special-education teacher in Astoria who has been writing and performing for forty years. He has numerous lit magazines and anthologies, a few chapbooks, a CD and a cassette out there. Currently he is working on a book, *she said* for an editor in California.

TERRY SHUMAKER was born February 13, 1944, and from then on everything went blank.

TELA SKINNER loves retirement in Neah-Kah-Nie with her husband, Michael, and her labradoodle, Maddie. Her poetry and prose have been published in *RAIN* and *North Coast Squid*.

TIM SPROUL is a writer, creative director, and poet who has traveled the world creating and discovering art. His recent intrigue is collaborating with musicians. Tim grew up in Newport, and currently lives in Portland, Oregon.

MICHAEL SORDLUVSKI, originally from the Northwest, spends most of his time traveling the world, living on the road. He still considers his brief visits to the forests, seas and mountains of the Northwest to be the best of times.

SCOTT T. STARBUCK was a 2013 Artsmith Fellow on Orcas Island. He feels the destruction of Earth's ecosystems is related to spiritual illness and widespread urban destruction of human consciousness. He blogs at riverseek.blogspot.com.

LARKIN STENTZ is Steward of Green Angel Gardens Sustainable Living Center in Long Beach, WA. He has recorded eleven albums, published two books, and produced the Light concerts at the River Theater, Astoria.

R. L. SWIHART currently lives in Long Beach, CA, and teaches secondary school mathematics in Los Angeles. His poems have appeared in various online and print journals, including *Right Hand Pointing*, *1110*, *decomp*, *Posit*, and *Lunch Ticket*. His first collection of poems, *The Last Man*, was published in 2012 by Desperanto Press.

KIM TAYLOR has been enthralled by the world around her for as long as she can remember. She has always enjoyed taking photographs in an attempt to "hold" beauty still for as long as she wanted and likes displaying her work for others to critique and marvel at right along with her. She has been on the Oregon coast for over twenty years and loves this place!

KARIN TEMPLE, native of Germany and resident of Astoria, is a former editor of *RAIN* and the author of five books of poetry. For ten years, she has facilitated the First Sunday of the Month Labyrinth Walks and recently walks at the North Coast Youth Correctional Facility in Warrenton.

NOEL THOMAS was born in Longview, studied art in Los Angeles, and pursued a fifteen year career in advertising in New York and Los Angeles before returning to the Northwest 1974. He currently paints watercolors out of his Astoria, OR and is represented by RiverSea Gallery in Astoria.

R. BLAINE VERLEY is a teacher and artist who also tries his hand at writing on occasion. An alumnus of CCC, he has a BS from PSU. He grew up in east Clatsop County and has lived in Astoria for about twenty of the last forty-two years. **TAMI**

VINCENT was born and raised in Petersburg, Alaska. She has spent the last fifteen years splitting time between Portland and her favorite spots along the Oregon Coast.

TERRI VINEYARD is a native Astorian, a stay-at-home mom, a home school teacher, and student with Southern New Hampshire University's College of Continuing Education. She will be graduating with her B.A. in English Language & Literature this July and hopes attend graduate school in special education in New Hampshire.

AMELIA WELDEN recently moved to Astoria from Ypsilanti, Michigan. She has an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and her novella *Rosalind, Nevada* is forthcoming from Virginia Avenue Press.

JOE WOOD is a second year automotive student at CCC and enjoys writing now and then about topics that interest him. This is his first time submitting one of his works to *RAIN*.

KERRI ZELL has lived in Astoria for thirty years. She started taking classes in 2008 and enrolled in the ceramics class where she found her love—CLAY! After graduating CCC in 2013, she has continued studying ceramics and atmospheric firing as a new member of the wood fire and potting community that makes bowls for The Harbor (formally Women's Resource Center) Soup Bowl Project, directed by Richard Rowland.

SHANE BLISS, **SONOVA AIKEN**, **JOSEFINE MABRY**, **JAYMES CONDON**, **HOLLY ECKHARDT**, **BROOKLYN ANDREWS**, **SETH PINCE-TICH**, **KALEY HARRIS**, and **AMIRAE GRIFFIN** are students at Clatsop Community College. **LUCERO BERMUDEZ**, **BELINDA CONTRERAS**, **SARA MICKELSON**, **J.R. RUSSELL** are second graders in Lisa Hankwitz's class at Astor Elementary. As for others, hopefully if you're not here, it's because you didn't send a bio. Or, if we missed you, so sorry. **PEACE**.

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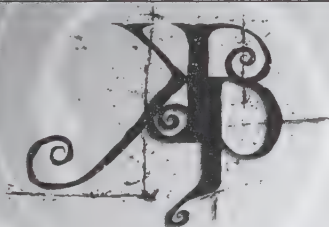
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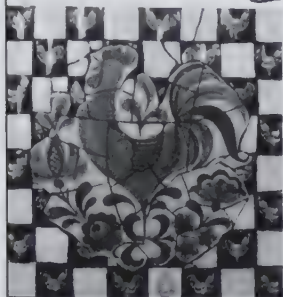
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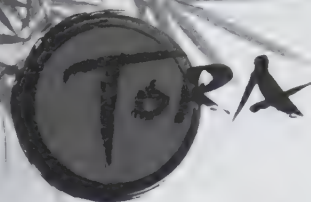
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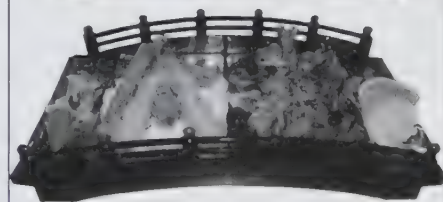
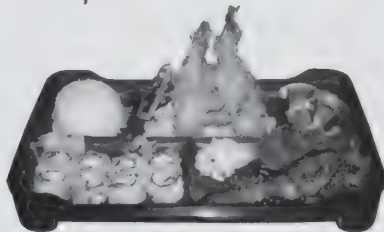
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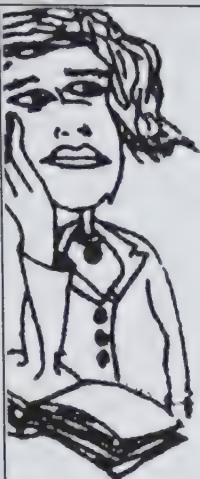
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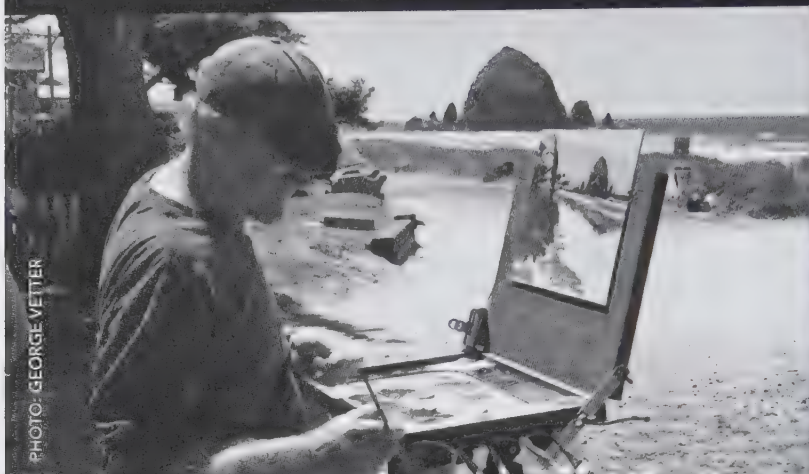
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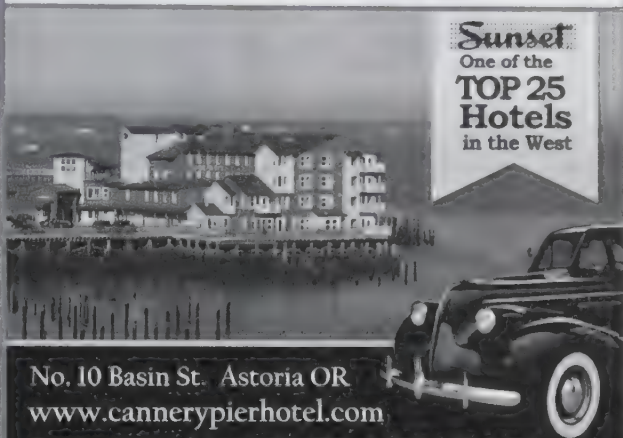
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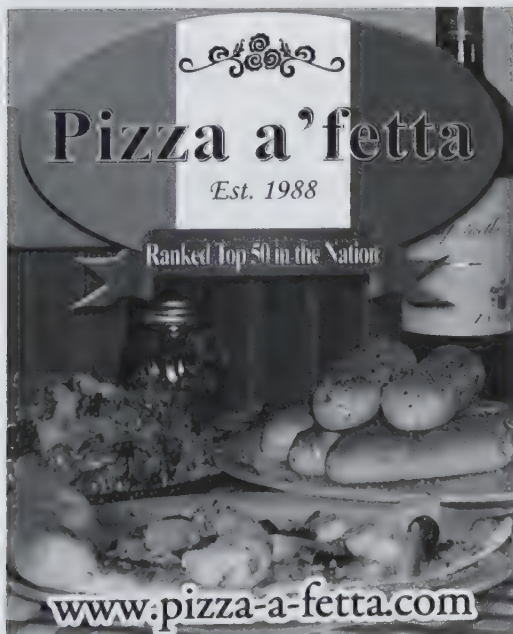
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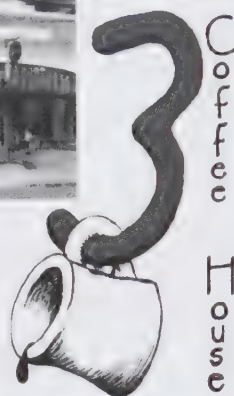
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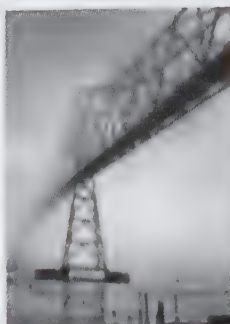


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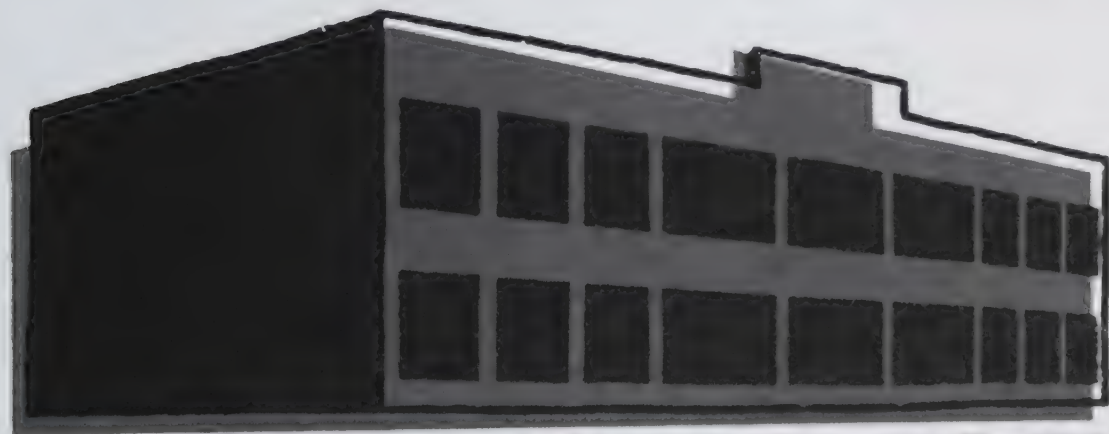
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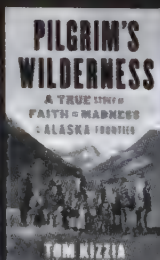
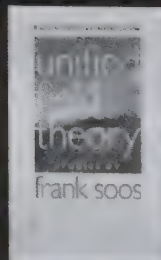
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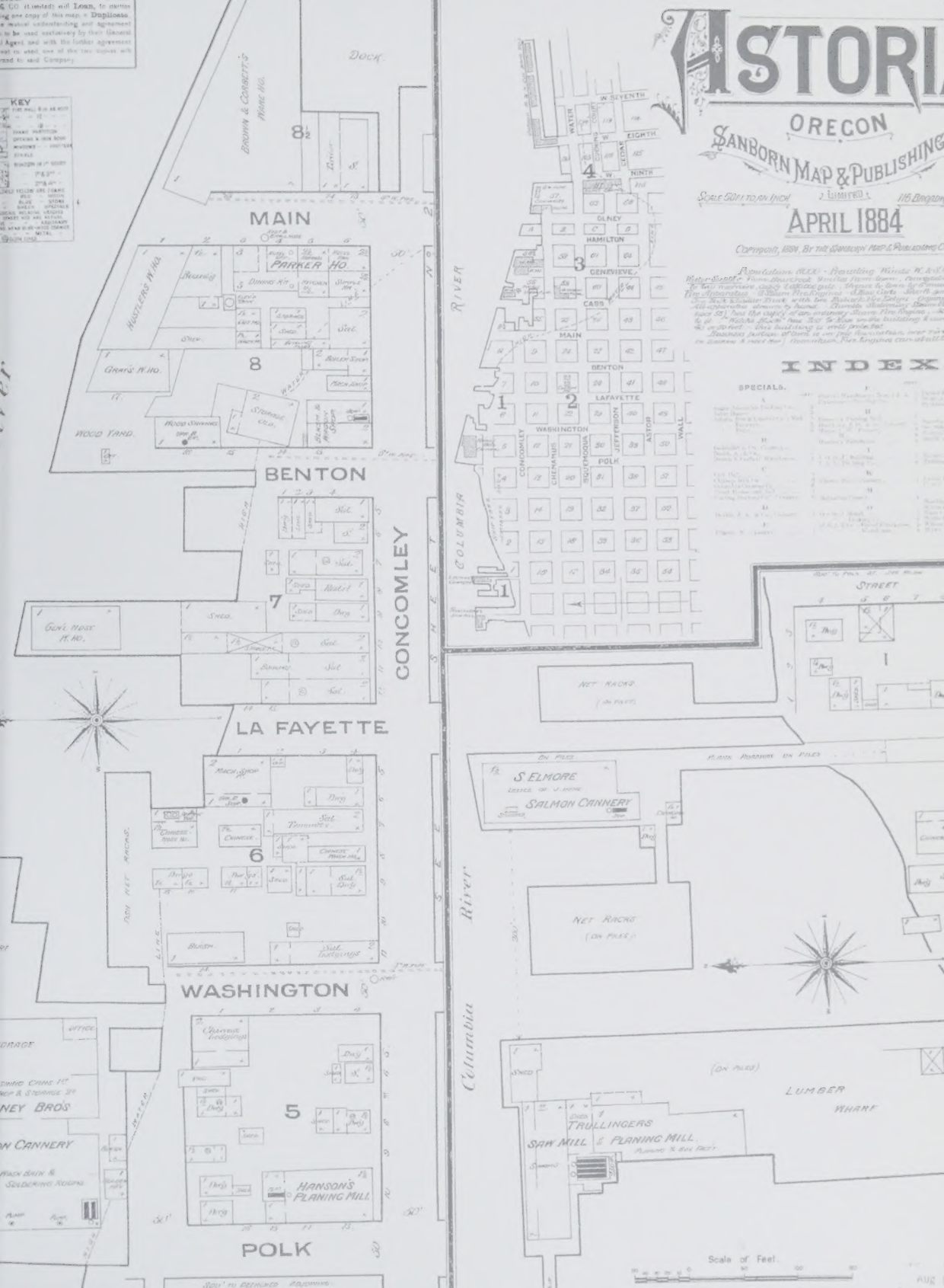
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